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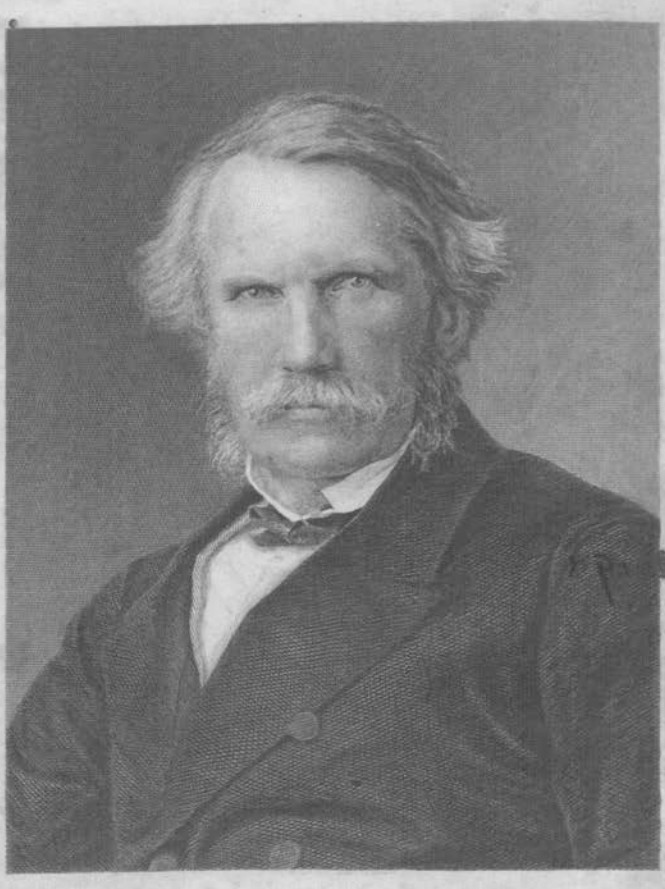

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LIFE

OF

LORD LAWRENCE

BY

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LIFE

OF

LORD LAWRENCE.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE. 1811—1829.

NOWHERE within the circuit of the British Islands is a more interesting, a more vigorous, or a more strongly marked type of character to be found than among the inhabitants of the North and North-east of Ireland. The people who have sprung from that sturdy mixture of Scotch and Irish blood are not without their conspicuous faults. No race which is at once so vigorous and so mixed is ever free from them. A suspiciousness and caution which often verges on selfishness, an ambition which is as quiet as it is intense, a slow and unloveable calculation of consequences, these are some of the drawbacks which those who know and love them best are willing to admit. On the other hand, there have been found amongst the Scoto-Irish men who, under the most widely different circumstances, in Great Britain itself, in that 'Greater Britain' which lies across the Atlantic, and amongst our widely scattered dependencies, last, not least, in that greatest dependency of all, our Indian Empire, have rendered the noblest service to the State as intrepid soldiers, as vigorous administrators, as wise and far-seeing statesmen. Among the Scoto-Irish there have been found men who have combined in their own persons much of the rich humour and the strong affections, the vivacity and the versatility, the genius and the generosity of the typical Irishman, with the patience and the prudence, the devotion and the self-reliance,

the stern morality and the simple faith of the typical Scotchman. In some families one of these national types seems to predominate throughout, almost to the exclusion of the other. In others the members differ much among themselves; one conforming, mainly, to the Scotch, another to the Irish type of character, although each may manage to retain something which is most distinctive of the other. This last would seem to have been the case with the heretofore little known family which the names of Henry and John Lawrence have made a household word with Englishmen wherever they are to be found, and which, it may safely be predicted, will be loved and honoured, so long as England retains any reverence for what is great and good.

In the wide circle of that illustrious brotherhood which sprung from the marriage of Alexander Lawrence and Letitia Catherine Knox, it is hardly fanciful to say that Henry Lawrence was essentially an Irishman, but with a substratum of those deeper and sterner qualities which we generally consider to be Scotch; that John was essentially a Scotchman, but possessed also much of what is truly loveable and admirable in the typical Irishman. A study of the character of two gifted brothers, so like and yet so unlike, would have been of deep interest even if it had been the will of Providence that they should have lived and died, as their grandfather had lived and died before them, amidst the petty interests and the monotonous routine of the quiet town of Coleraine. But this was not to be. In the strange vicissitudes of human fortune, the two brothers, differing widely as they did in aptitudes and temperament, and separated from each other in very early life, were brought together again in India: the one from the Army, the other from the Civil Service, to sit at the same Council Board, and to rule in concert that huge and warlike province which, a year or two before, had seemed to threaten the very existence of our Indian Empire. They were to rule that huge province, in spite of their mutual differences, with unbroken success. When, at last, the differences became unbearable, like the patriarch of old and his younger relative, they were to 'agree to differ,' each going on his different path, but still united, each to each, in their purity of purpose, in their simplicity of character, and in their love for the people of India; each appreciating the other's gifts, each doing full justice to the other's aims, and each retaining, as it will be my happiness to show, in spite of many heartburnings, his brotherly affection for the other to the very end.

Each was to be called off in a measure, or for the time, from his proper calling. The elder brother, the ardent artilleryman, was, in comparatively early life, to drop the soldier and to take to civil work and after living to be named, should he survive Lord Canning, the provisional Governor-General of India, was destined, while defending against desperate odds the capital of his province, to die at last a soldier's death, beloved as no Englishman in India has been beloved before or since.

The younger brother, who had been born a soldier, but whom Providence or Fate had willed should be a civilian, was destined, during his brilliant government of the Punjab, to do more in the hour of our utmost peril than any mere soldier could have done; to tell some of the bravest generals that what they thought impossible he would make possible; to call forth armed men, as it were, by thousands from the ground, and to launch them, one after the other, at that distant spot where his insight told him that an empire must be lost or won; then, to rule the empire he had done so much to save; and, last of all, to die in a ripe old age, surrounded by those most dear to him, and to be buried, amidst the regrets of a nation, in Westminster Abbey, honoured, perhaps, as no Anglo Indian has before been honoured; a man who never swam with the stream, who bravely strove to stem the current, and, regardless alike of popular and of aristocratic favour, pleaded with his latest breath for what he thought to be right and just. To the biography of men whose lives have been so strangely checquered, of men who have not so much made history as become, as it were, a history in themselves, belongs of inherent right the highest interest and importance alike of history and of biography.

The life of the elder brother has been long since written, in the greater part at least, by one who knew him well. It has fallen to my lot, under disadvantages which neither I nor my readers are likely to undervalue, to attempt the biography of the younger. During the more eventful period of Lord Lawrence's life, I knew him only, as most Englishmen know him now, from his deeds. But during his last few years, it was my happiness to know him well; and I am speaking the simple truth when I say that, to converse with a man who had done such deeds, and yet seemed so utterly unconscious of them; who had such vast stores of Indian knowledge, and yet gave them forth as though he were a learner rather than a teacher; who was brave and strong and rough as a giant, but tender as a woman

and simple as a child, seemed to me then, and seems still, to have been a privilege for which, if one was not a great deal the better, one would deserve to be a great deal the worse. If I am able to describe John Lawrence in any degree as I have often seen him, and as I trust a careful study of his voluminous correspondence, and the help, given freely to me in conversation by his relations, his friends, and his opponents, have revealed him to me, I shall not have written in vain. With greater skill, with much greater knowledge, his biography might, undoubtedly, have been written by one and by another who, unlike myself, had known him throughout his life, and who have perhaps a knowledge of India only less than John Lawrence himself; but I venture to think that it could scarcely have been written by any one with a keener sense of responsibility or with a more genuine enthusiasm.

And here, once for all, let me remark—and then I will, as far as possible, dismiss the biographer to the place which, in any good biography, he ought to hold—that the spirit in which I have endeavoured to study my subject is not the spirit of one who fears the simple truth. John Lawrence was nothing if he was not truthful; he was transparent as the day, and my highest aim has been to render to so 'heroically simple' a character that homage which is its due—the homage of unalloyed truth. So far as I have been able to avoid it, I have toned down nothing; I have exhibited his character in all its lights and shades. The life of Lord Lawrence could not have been lived by any such perfect, by any such unexceptionable, I might add by any such insipid characters, as it is the delight of many biographers to portray. If it be true, as one who was not likely to feel much sympathy for Lord Lawrence's character has observed, that 'great revolutions are not made by greased cartridges,' much less is it true that John Lawrence could have done one half of what he did had he regulated his life by conventional standards, or had he known how to adapt his opinions and his practices to those which were most in favour at the hour. If John Lawrence had, in his best days, the strength and the courage of a giant, happily, for the interest of his biography, he had also something of the rough humour, of the boisterous pranks, of the wild spirit of adventure which we usually associate with the Norwegian Troll. He always said, as the letters I shall quote will abundantly show, exactly what he thought. He always acted—as every action of his life will prove—exactly as he spoke. He raised against himself, as every strong ruler, as every

vigorous reformer, as every great man must inevitably do, not a few enemies; he attached to himself, by the self-same processes, and for the self-same reasons, troops of most devoted and most loyal friends. Those, then, who would see John Lawrence not as he was, but as, perchance, they think he ought to have been, must go elsewhere. The rugged lineaments and the deep furrows of his grand countenance—

> For his face
> Deep scars of thunder had entrenched, and care
> Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
> Of dauntless courage—

are a picture, which he who runs may read, of the grand and rugged character which lay beneath it, and which it has been my highest aim to strive faithfully to reproduce.

The father of John Lawrence was just such a man, and had lived just such a life, as might have been expected of the father of such a son. His life had been one continuous struggle with an unkind fate. Hairbreadth escapes, moving accidents by flood and field; brave deeds innumerable, often handsomely acknowledged by his superiors, but requited scantily or not at all; the seeds of disease sown by exposure and by his many wounds; the prolonged pinch of poverty; a keen sense of slighted merit, and a spirit naturally proud, yet compelled to stoop to ask as a favour what he felt to be his right, and to remind his employers of deserts of which they should rather have been the first to remind him: these and other elements of the kind go to make up the tragedy of his hard and weather-beaten life. He was fortunate in one thing only, that he had sons whose deeds were destined to be better requited than his had been, and whose lives, enshrined in the memories of their grateful countrymen, have compelled, and, it may be, will, to all future time, compel them, to inquire what manner of man was the father from whom they came.

Sir Herbert Edwardes, in his life of Sir Henry Lawrence, has preserved the long roll of Alexander Lawrence's services, recorded chiefly by his own indignant pen. It is unnecessary, therefore, here to do more than glance at them. Left an orphan, at the early age of ten, to the care of his sisters at Coleraine, Alexander Lawrence, impatient of restraint and athirst for adventure, went off in his seventeenth year, without a commission, as a volunteer to India. It was four full years before he was allowed to purchase the commission which his merits had long since won. But in those four years he

had managed to see as much active service in the field and to receive as many hard knocks as would have entitled him, nowadays, to hasten home to receive a dozen swords of honour, and a dozen addresses of congratulation at a dozen public dinners. As a lieutenant, he fought and distinguished himself near Seringapatam, at Cochin, at Colombo, at the Canote river, and in the battle of Sedaseer Finally, at the famous storming of Seringapatam, he had a full opportunity of showing the stuff of which he was made.

On May 4, 1799, he volunteered, with three other lieutenants, to lead the forlorn hope at the storming of Tippu Sultan's famous capital. Of these four, he was the one survivor, and it was not his fault that he was so. When he reached the top of the glacis he received a ball in his arm, which he carried with him to his grave. But observing that his men were standing still to form and fire when they ought to have been rushing in, he ran forward, wounded as he was, 'from right to left of the rear rank of the forlorn hope, hurrahing to them to move on' When this had no effect, he ran through their files to the front, calling out, 'Now is the time for the breach!' On reaching the foot of the breach, he received a second ball, which carried off one finger, and shattered another into several pieces. But, even so, he did not give in till he had seen his men carry the breach. Then, fainting from loss of blood, he fell down where he was and lay scarcely sensible, under the fiery mid-day sun of May, till one of the soldiers of his own regiment, when the fighting was over, came strolling over the spot, and, recognising the uniform on what he supposed to be a dead man, turned his body over. Seeing who it was, and observing that there was some life 'in the old dog yet,' he carried him off, as best he could, on his shoulders to the camp, swearing, as he toiled along, that he would not do as much for any other man of them.[1]

It is unnecessary to follow further his military career. In one of his earlier campaigns, by lying on the wet ground at night, he had caught a fever, which gave him, at intervals, throughout the rest of his life many rough reminders; and, in 1809, he returned to England after fifteen years' hard service, broken down in health and still only a regimental captain. His merits procured him one or two appointments in England, and, as Lieutenant-Colonel of a veteran battalion at Ostend in 1815 he must have been within earshot of the cannonade at Waterloo; a privilege exasperating enough to the man who

[1] *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, by Sir Herbert Edwardes, vol. i. pp. 4-6.

had stormed the breach at Seringapatam, and now in vain petitioned to be sent to the front. When, at last, he was driven to sell his commission for fear that, if he died, as then seemed likely, the price of it—the only worldly property he possessed—would be lost to his family, he obtained a pension of 100*l.* a year for his wounds, a pittance which, as he grimly remarked, would do little more than pay his doctors! This pension, it is pleasant or painful to add, was, not without frequent petitions from himself, afterwards considerably increased, and the old hero did not die until he had sent forth in succession five sons, all of the same sterling metal as himself, to the country to which he had given his life.

'If you are ever brought before a court-martial, sir,' he said somewhat sternly to his son George St. Patrick, when leaving England, a man afterwards known to Sikhs and Afghans alike as a model of cool courage and chivalrous honour—'if you are ever brought before a court-martial, sir, never let me see your face again.' With greater pathos and with equal truth might the tough and travel-worn veteran have addressed each one of his sons as he sent them off to the country which had proved so cruel a step-mother to him, in the words that Virgil puts into the mouth of the Trojan warrior—

> Learn of your father to be great,
> Of others to be fortunate.

One incident only of his life in England requires to be mentioned here. In the year 1809, shortly, that is, after he returned from India, he became Major of his regiment, the 19th Foot, which was, then or soon afterwards, quartered at the small town of Richmond, in Yorkshire, and it was while he was living here, on March 4, 1811, that John Laird Mair, the sixth of his sons and the eighth of his children, was born. What wonder that, some fifty years later, when Sir John Lawrence was returning home after the Mutiny, with his honours thick upon him, thinking, as well he might, that his career was over and that he had earned his repose, he told a trusted friend, with a tinge of sadness, that one of his first visits would be to the place which had given him birth? What wonder, either, that the accident of his birth at an English town tempted more than one English statesman in the first burst of the national grief at Lord Lawrence's death to claim the great Scoto-Irishman as, in part at least, their own, and to point out in eloquent language that he had combined in his person the best social and moral characteristics of

the British Islands—Irish boldness, Scotch caution, and English endurance?

But what of John Lawrence's mother? What was her character, and what share had she in the moulding of her son? Here again we are not left to surmise or inference alone. For Sir Herbert Edwardes quotes an account of her given him in after years by 'one of her sons,' whom I have no hesitation in pronouncing, from internal evidence, to have been John Lawrence himself. 'I should say,' he writes, 'that, on the whole, we derived most of our metal from our father. Both my father and mother possessed much character. She had great administrative qualities. She kept the family together, and brought us all up on very slender means. She kept the purse, and managed all domestic affairs. . . . When I was coming out to India, my poor old mother made me a speech somewhat to the following effect:—"I know you don't like advice, so I will not give you much. But pray recollect two things. Don't marry a woman who had not a *good* mother, and don't be too ready to speak your mind. It was the rock on which your father shipwrecked his prospects."'

One or two points call for notice here. The mother who spoke thus was a Knox, the daughter of a Donegal clergyman, but descended from the Scotch reformer. She prided herself on her descent; and simple, thrifty, homely, God-fearing as she was, her relation to the reformer was not that of blood alone. She possessed that sound good sense and that steady perseverance which marks so many of the Scotch settlers in Ulster. If John Lawrence was right in supposing that he owed 'most of his metal,' most, that is, of his courage and his military instincts, of his iron resolution, and his love of adventure, to his father, it is probably not less true, whether he knew it or not, that he owed his shrewd common sense, his hatred of ostentation and of extravagance, and the vein of deep religious feeling, which displayed itself specially in his later life, but underlay the whole of it, to his mother. The influence of a mother who could follow uncomplainingly from youth to age the fortunes or misfortunes of her somewhat impracticable and wayward husband, who could rear a family of twelve children on the scantiest means, and, wandering as she was obliged to wander from place to place, could yet hold them together and give them something in each successive residence which they could look upon as their 'home,' is not to be measured by its immediate or ostensible results. Men rarely understand—perhaps they are incapable of understanding—the amount of patient endur-

ance, the thousand rubs and annoyances, which a long-suffering wife or mother bears, and bears in silence, that the current of the family life may flow smoothly on. When she succeeds, her efforts, as likely as not, pass unnoticed ; they are lost in her success. Nor would she wish it otherwise. Where she fails, as fail sometimes she must, on her falls the blame. But the influence of such a woman is a living influence notwithstanding. It is felt, not seen ; unacknowledged, perhaps, but well understood. It pervades the home life ; nay, when she is removed by death, it is found to have made the home itself, and it survives, henceforward, as the genuine undercurrent in the lives of all those who have been happy enough to have been brought within its sphere. One such influence—the most sacred and most cherished of all memories—it may have been the lot of one or another among my readers to have known, and some such influence, the same in kind, though not certainly in degree, I gather from the letters which have come into my hands, was that of Letitia Knox.

Not that her character was especially lovable or tender, or that the home she made would, now-a-days, be called a genial or a happy home. The domestic management seems to have been hard and unyielding. There were no luxuries ; hardly even were there any of the comforts of life. It could not have been otherwise. The old Colonel's very select library, consisting chiefly of his Josephus and his Rollin, was not such as to supply food for young minds which were either inquisitive of historical fact like that of John, or full of imagination and sentiment like that of Henry Lawrence. More pleasant than the Colonel's library must have been the stories of his adventurous life, told to his children during their country walks. More pleasant still must have been the nursery, where 'old nurse Margaret' ventured, in the children's interest, to break the hard-and-fast rules of diet laid down by the higher authorities for the children's good. Pleasantest of all must have been the gentle influence of that 'Aunt Angel' who, for many years, had her home with the Lawrences, and whose room was the favourite resort of the whole family —one of those beautiful spirits which has learned early in life to sacrifice itself, and is able at last to find its own happiness in nothing but in that of others.

Portraits of Alexander Lawrence and of his wife still remain, and, apart from the interest attaching to their features as the parents of their children, each has a touch of pathos or romance peculiarly its own.

In the miniature of the brave old veteran which belongs to Sir George Lawrence, his eldest surviving son, besides the deep lines on the face which are a distinguishing mark of the Lawrence family and which are now known to the world in the features of the subject of this biography, may be noticed, on the right cheek, the traces of a deep sabre-cut received in one of his earlier engagements, while the mere fragment of a right hand remaining to him recalls the stormer of Seringapatam.

The portrait of the mother is larger, and is in the possession of her younger son, General Richard Lawrence, a man whose promptitude and valour, as I shall hereafter show, did us good service in the Mutiny, alike at Sealcote and at Lahore. Simple in her life, and dependent in her old age upon 'the Lawrence fund,' contributed by her sons, she steadfastly resisted all the entreaties of her family that she would have her portrait taken. Perhaps, she thought it a waste of money; perhaps, in the eyes of a descendant of John Knox, it savoured of vanity or ostentation. But what she declined to do for her children, she was willing and anxious that they should do for her. So the daughter sat down close by her mother's side. The painter worked away, and the ruse was not discovered till the portrait was well finished, and revealed, to the surprise of the aged mother, the features not of her daughter, but of herself. It was a truly pious fraud, and was duly acquiesced in by the old lady. There she sits, bolt upright, facing full the painter or the spectator, prim and neat, serious and matter-of-fact, with a high-crowned cap, a wide collar, and a shawl pinned neatly at the shoulders, as was the fashion of her younger days—for *she* never changed fashion with the changing times—her knitting in her hand, while she herself is absorbed in her work, and is quite unconscious of the fraud that is being played upon her by the man whom she is looking full in the face!

It is almost a truism, that it is a happy thing for all concerned if, in a large family of brothers and sisters, a sister happens to be the eldest. If she is worthy of her place, her influence moulds, softens, checks, refines, elevates. She forms a common centre round which the other members of the family revolve. If they are able to agree in little else, they agree in their trust in her. Such was the lot of the Lawrence family. The eldest son died at the age of three years, the very day on which Letitia was born, as though the brother would make room for the sister, and worthily she filled her place. She had the courage and force of command of the most famous of her

brothers, but she combined with it much of the tenderness and of the softer and subtler influences of woman. She belonged not to that type of woman, a type all too common, who pride themselves on their influence over men, and, content with it, reserve for their own sex what is unattractive and unlovely. Such a woman would have been as hateful to Letitia herself as to her brothers. Her sisters-in-law, some of whom were women of marked character as well as gifted with rare charms, owned her sway, and grudged not the influence which she retained, as of right, over her brothers to the end. She was the adviser and guide of the whole family. Her will was law, not so much because it was a resolute will as because she never sought her own. To her the strongest-minded of her brothers came for advice, as men came to Ahithophel of old, as though they would 'inquire of the oracle of God.' She thus, in large measure, as we shall hereafter see, shaped the destinies of her brothers' lives. In their intercourse with her, their rougher and more tempestuous side seems altogether to have disappeared. They told her every difficulty, shared with her every joy and sorrow, and corresponded with her in the most intimate and unrestrained intercourse until her death.

What Henry Lawrence felt towards her and what her influence over him was like, is apparent to those who have read the letters which passed between them, and which have been quoted so abundantly by Sir Herbert Edwardes. John Lawrence, in like manner, kept up a correspondence with her throughout his life, crammed as it was with multitudinous cares and multifarious occupations, till death came between them. What he, too, felt towards her is clear from the remark which, in the bitterness of his soul, was wrung from him when he heard of her death, that he would never have gone to India, as Viceroy had he thought that he would never see her again. The letters which passed between him and her, and which, up to that time, had been religiously preserved by each, were deliberately destroyed by the survivor on his return from India. He objected—as who in his heart of hearts does not object?—to the publication of essentially private letters But what the loss has been to the biographer in attempting, with such materials as are at his disposal, to do justice to the inner and gentler side of Lord Lawrence's character, the few letters to her which have accidentally come into his hands too surely show. Could they have been published with a clear conscience, they would have shown by themselves that John Lawrence was as tender as he was strong. The loss, I repeat, to the

biographer is incalculable ; but, at least, he is saved, in this instance, one of his greatest difficulties—the task of deciding, where the correspondence is so sacred, what he will have the courage to publish or the heart to withhold.

Such, in outline, was the home and such the home influences on the Lawrence children. It was a locomotive home enough. Richmond from the year 1809, Guernsey from 1812, Ostend in 1815, and Clifton thenceforward to the old Colonel's death ; these were the successive headquarters of the family from the time when Alexander Lawrence returned to England from India. In the year 1813 occurred the first considerable break in the family. The three elder sons, Alexander, George, and Henry, were sent off from Guernsey to the 'Free Grammar School of Londonderry.' It was situated within the walls of the famous maiden fortress, close to the site of St. Augustine's church, and was under the care of their maternal uncle, the Rev. James Knox. It was then in a transition state, for, in the following year, its governors set an example which the governing bodies of the great schools of London are only now beginning to imitate. They authorised its removal from the interior of the city, and, with the active assistance of the then Bishop of Derry, Dr. William Knox, they re-erected it on a much more advantageous site.

The spot selected was a hill in the suburbs, commanding a fine view of the historic fortress and of the steep banks and pretty country villas on the other side of the wide ship-traversed river Foyle which flows beneath, and has, since that time, given to the school the more ambitious name of Foyle College. It was a spot well calculated to stir the generous enthusiasm and the historical sympathies of the boys who were there brought up. But, over and above this, it possessed, what must have been a special recommendation in the eyes of the stern old Colonel, in that his sons, being relatives of the head master, would be able to remain there the whole year through ! In other words, they were to have no holidays ; and, during the years that they remained there, I can find no trace of any unproductive expenditure of time or money on the journeys from Guernsey to Londonderry and back.

Here, then, let us leave, for the present, the three elder brothers and see how it was faring meanwhile with their younger brother John. One or two facts only have been preserved about him. His sister Letitia used to relate that her motherly feelings had been first called out towards him when she found him, one day, crying violently and

discovered that a bit of hot coal had, somehow, lodged itself between his cheek and his baby cap-strings, and had inflicted a mark which was to last all his life. Another incident has a more melancholy interest when taken in connection with the calamity which befel him in the latter years of his life; for it was the shadow of his cross that was to be. When he was about five years old, he had a bad attack of ophthalmia, which obliged him to be kept in a darkened room for a whole year. He would lie on a sofa, holding the hand of his sister or his nurse Margaret, while they read aloud to him. It was their care of him during this period which helped to call forth the devotion he ever afterwards felt for both; and he would often say, in his later life, that he would be able to recognise any when and anywhere, by its feeling, the hand of either of his kind attendants. Some of his earliest recollections were associated with that eventful year which saw the hundred days' campaign and heard the roar of Waterloo; and he tells us in a fragment of autobiography which has come into my hands, that, being thrown much upon his father's society owing to the absence of his elder brothers, he used to accompany him in his walks and listen to the stirring tales of his adventurous and ill-requited campaigns. It seems not to have occurred to the disappointed veteran that he might be arousing, by these very tales, within the boy's breast military hopes and aspirations which, one day, he might find it difficult to quench. For he had resolved, in the bitterness of his heart, that no son of his, if he could help it, should join the service which had served him so ill.

One incident of John Lawrence's early life connected with his nurse Margaret, whom he loved so tenderly, I am able to relate from the recollection of his youngest daughter Maude, almost in his own words. He was fond of telling it, and few that ever heard Lord Lawrence tell a story were likely altogether to forget it:—

One day, when I was about four or five years old and was staying with my father and mother at Ostend, my nurse Margaret was sent to market to purchase food for the day. She was sent with a 5*l.* note and was ordered to bring back the change. When I heard that my nurse was going to the market, I at once went to my mother to get permission to go with her. I was always fond of going out with her. She used to tell me all kinds of weird stories, which would fill me with a kind of awe for her. So I trotted along by her side, she amusing me as she went along. When we got to the market she purchased several things—at one stall a pair of fowls, at another vegetables, here bread or flour, and there some-

thing else necessary for our household. Now it happened that though Margaret had often been there, and was well known, she had never had so much money with her before. This excited suspicion. She could not get her note changed, many people thinking she had not come by it fairly. At last there was a great hubbub, the shop-people accusing her, while she maintained her innocence. It was finally settled by their taking her before the magistrate to be examined. He asked her who she was, who was her master, and what was her occupation. She was dreadfully confused and frightened, and could hardly say a word. All she could get out was that her master was Colonel Lawrence and that his little boy was with her. On hearing my name, I began to feel very important, and thought I would now come forward and speak up for my nurse, so out I came from behind her—for I had clung to her all the time—and said in as loud a voice as I could manage, 'Why, Sir, it's our old nurse Margaret; she is a very good woman, and all that she says is quite true; I came to the market with her to buy our food, and papa gave her the money. I think that if you will let her go, you will do right, as my father knows that what I say is quite true.' The magistrate saw quite clearly now that everything was above board, so we were allowed to go home in peace. He said to me before we went away, 'Well done, little man; you spoke up for your nurse bravely.' I was tremendously stuck up by this, and walked home with my nurse, feeling immensely important and thinking that I must now take care of Margaret, and not she of me.

When the three elder brothers left Foyle College in 1819, John was brought, for the first time, into the society of his brother Henry, that brother whose life and character were to be so closely connected, and yet to form so strong a contrast to his own. They went together to a Mr. Gough's school at College Green, Bristol. It was a day school, and John, a 'little urchin,' as he describes himself, 'of eight,' used to trudge along four times a day with unequal steps by the side of his brother Henry, 'a bony powerful boy' of thirteen, over the hill which separates Clifton and Bristol. His sister recollects how, tired out by his walks and his work, he used, in the evenings, to lie at full length upon the hearthrug, preparing his lessons for the following day. One reminiscence of these school-days has already been quoted by Sir Herbert Edwardes in John Lawrence's own words, but it is too authentic a record not to find a place again here:—

I remember, when we were both at school at Bristol, there was a poor Irish usher named O'Flaherty, and he had done something to offend the master of the school, who called up all the boys and got on the table and made us a great speech, in which he denounced poor

O'Flaherty as 'a viper he had been harbouring in his bosom;' and he also denounced some one of the boys who had taken O'Flaherty's part as 'an assassin who had deeply wounded him!' I was a little chap then, eight years old, and I did not understand what it was all about; but as I trotted home with Henry, who was then fourteen, I looked up and asked who the 'assassin' was who had 'wounded' the master. Henry very quietly replied, 'I am the assassin.' I remember, too, in connection with this very same row, seeing Henry get up very early one morning (we slept in the same room) and I asked where he was going. He said to Brandon Hill to fight Thomas. Thomas was the bully of the school. I asked if I might go with him, and he said, 'Yes, if you like.' I said, 'Who is to be your second?' Henry said, 'You, if you like.' So off we went to Brandon Hill to meet Thomas, but Thomas never came to the rendezvous and we returned with flying colours, and Thomas had to eat humble pie in the school. Henry was naturally a bony muscular fellow, very powerful; but that fever in Burmah seemed to scorch him up, and he remained all the rest of his life very thin and attenuated.

At such a school, discipline was not likely to be of the mildest kind, and the birch was probably the only instrument of moral suasion recognised. At all events, years afterwards, when some one asked Lord Lawrence whether there had been much flogging at his school, he replied, with grim satisfaction and Spartan brevity—and I have pretty well ascertained by the exhaustive method that the school must have been, not Foyle or Wraxall, but College Green—'I was flogged every day of my life at school except one, and then I was flogged twice.'

The time came for him to pass to a milder rule, and, in 1823, being then twelve years of age, he was transferred to his uncle's care at Foyle College. Almost coeval with the settlement of Ulster, this school has sent forth, from its earliest times, a long succession of distinguished pupils; and, probably, no school of its size ever contained within its walls at the same time a greater number of boys who were destined to become famous than were to be found at Foyle College during the period of which I write. Among them were Sir George Lawrence, the lion-hearted and chivalrous prisoner of Afghan and Sikh; Sir Henry Lawrence, Sir John Lawrence, Sir Robert Montgomery! Strange indeed that the last three of these men should have lived to rule the Punjab in concert, and play, by universal consent, a foremost part in that struggle of heroes which saved our Indian Empire!

I cannot find by careful inquiry among the few schoolfellows of

John Lawrence who have survived him that, even now, looking back in the light of all that he has done, they saw, or think that they saw, any promise of his future eminence. He cast no shadow before him. Robert Montgomery then, as ever afterwards—alike in India and in South Kensington—his intimate friend and companion, only recollects that he was 'determined and quick-tempered, and that in their walks together he used to entertain him with long stories of sieges and battles.' As a boy and as a young man, he read, as he says himself, 'much history and biography in a rather desultory way;' and it is to this kind of reading that, man of action as he was throughout his life, he owed such traces of culture as he possessed or would ever have cared to claim. His life, from the time that he set foot in India, left no room at all for that leisure which is the necessary condition of high culture. But, remembering how crammed was his life with action, his historical knowledge was remarkable. He was accurately acquainted with the campaigns of the leading generals of ancient and modern times, and he could discuss them alike with the wide sweep of a theorist and with the minute knowledge of a specialist. I well remember, shortly before his death, being struck with the minute knowledge he showed in a casual conversation on a period of ancient history—the campaigns of Hannibal—of which I had, just then, been making a special study. Plutarch's 'Lives' were always in his hands at school and at home, and, in after life, he used to say, half humorously, half seriously, that when he was in doubt in any difficult matter he would turn over its pages till he came to some suggestive passage. And these 'sortes Plutarchianæ' seem to have been, on one or two critical occasions, of at least as much practical service as were the 'sortes Virgilianæ' to the scholar of the Middle Ages, or the haphazard opening of the Bible to the unlettered Christian of to-day. But I am anticipating.

In any case, what an admirable hunting-ground would Londonderry and its neighbourhood be to a boy who was fond of history, or who had any military instincts! To roam along the ramparts of the heroic city amidst the quaint old culverins which, when the ammunition was exhausted, hurled bricks covered with lead against the foe; to visit the cathedral, crammed as it is with relics and trophies of the siege; to climb its tower, whence the sentries peered with hungry eyes for those distant sails far down the Foyle which were to bring the promised aid, and which, when they at length appeared, did so only to disappear again; to row to the spot where once frowned the

terrible boom, which the 'Mountjoy' and the 'Phœnix' forced at last, bringing, to the starving garrison, food which they could hardly stagger forth to grasp in their skeleton fingers; to stand in the pulpit where Ezekiel Hopkins, the craven bishop, preached submission to the powers that be, and George Walker, the patriot hero, thundered resistance to the death; to pass through the gate which the traitor Lundy would have thrown open, and to visit the spot whence, Judas-like, when he was detected, he slunk down the wall into the outer darkness; to join the 'prentice-boys when they celebrate their feast of Purim, and still hang in effigy the Haman of their race and creed;—all this would invest with something of historical romance the everyday life of even the most matter-of-fact boys at school, even as, to this day, it kindles into wild enthusiasm the sober-minded Puritans of the surrounding country.

The sports of the boys at Foyle College partook of the spirit-stirring and heroic character of their surroundings. There were about a hundred boys in the school, the boarders being chiefly the sons of the clergy and gentry of the adjoining counties; the day scholars the sons of the citizens of Derry. The broad distinction often drawn by boys themselves between boarders and day scholars was emphasised at Foyle by a mimic warfare, carried on sometimes in the shape of single combats between champions representative of each party, sometimes between the collective forces of the whole.

Here is an account of one of these Homeric combats, which I give in the words of Dr. Kennedy, a contemporary and brother-in-law of John Lawrence, who bore, as we shall see, no small part in it.

A fortress of stiff clay had been constructed by the boarders on a hillock in a field behind the school. This fortress we regularly manned and relieved, at six hours' interval, throughout the day and night. Our night operations were hazardous in more ways than one, for the relieving force had first to escape the notice of the masters as they crept surreptitiously out of the windows of the school-house. The day boys, on their part, would sometimes rise from their beds in a body in the middle of the night and march rapidly from Derry to the assault. Many a fierce onslaught and stubborn defence did our fortress witness beneath the light of the moon and stars. The weapons in use on these occasions were happily, not shelalahs, but cauliflower-stalks or, as we used to call them, 'kale runts'—no bad substitute for shelalahs, when held by the lighter end and swung by a powerful arm. Nor let it be imagined that there was not a fair proportion of casualties, and that the list of wounded was not sufficiently imposing. My own career was cut short for a time, and very

nearly for all time, in one of these engagements. During a brilliant sally with my comrades from the fortress, my retreat was cut off, and I found myself resisting, in a hand to hand combat, two fellows each a head taller than myself. I had managed to reach the top of a high fence which gave me a great advantage, but behind me was a perpendicular fall of twelve feet on to a road. They called on me to surrender at discretion; my answer was a blow with my kale runt on the head of one of my assailants. His companion caught me off my guard, and dealt me a blow on my legs which hurled me headlong on the road below. I had not then learned the knack of falling on my shoulders, and my skull came first in contact with the road. Fortunately it was equal to the occasion, and as to my neck, as my assailant remarked when I had recovered, it was not to be *broken*, it was reserved for a different fate. I escaped with a severe concussion of the brain.

Such were the amusements which nerved the courage and braced the sinews of the Lawrence generation.

It is illustrative of a savagery in schoolboy nature which has now nearly passed away, as well as of that mixture of national characteristics in John Lawrence to which I have already alluded, that, on first going to his English school at Clifton, he was nicknamed 'Paddy,' and received many kicks as being an Irishman; while, on being transferred to his Irish school at Foyle, he was nicknamed 'English John,' and received many, probably a good many more, kicks, as being an Englishman.

What the character of the education at Foyle College was like we are left to judge by the results, and by casual remarks in after life of the two brothers. That it was not a first-rate education is probable enough. 'For my part,' says Sir Henry Lawrence, 'my education consisted in kicks: I was never taught anything.' But boys are often apt, in perfect good faith, to attribute to their school what is due, in part at least, to their own shortcomings. John Lawrence, in the fragment of autobiography already quoted, probably states the case with greater fairness thus: 'At school and at college I did not work regularly and continuously, and did not avail myself of the opportunities which offered for securing a good education. But I worked by fits and starts. . . . When I went to college (Haileybury) I was a fair Latin and mathematical scholar, and a poor Greek one: but I had read a great deal in a desultory fashion, particularly of history and biography, and was generally, for my age, well-informed.'

The religious training was more persistent than judicious. A kind-hearted sister of the head master used to take this part of the

education under her special charge, and would send for the boys, one by one, from their play, every two or three days, that she might read and pray with them. The Lawrences, being nephews as well as pupils, got a double share of these attentions, and Sir Robert Montgomery well remembers how they used to slink by their aunt's room on tiptoe in hopes of escaping. It was a hope often disappointed; for the door would open on a sudden and the vigilant aunt carry them off in triumph to her lecture.

If the seeds of John Lawrence's deep religious convictions were sown now, it is certain that they long lay dormant, and it is probable that it was to a reaction from the forcing system of Foyle College that was due the most striking characteristic of his religious belief—its reserve and its unobtrusiveness. He seldom talked of religion, hardly ever said a word that was distinctly religious even to his intimate friends and relations. Yet everybody knew it was there. Levity and irreligion stood abashed in his presence. His religion seemed to be too sacred and too simple to admit of handling in common talk. It was a plant with roots so deep and so tender that he would not allow himself, still less any one else, to pluck it up to see how it was growing.

In 1825 John Lawrence left Foyle, and went to finish the first part of his education at Wraxall Hall, a large rambling Elizabethan house in North Wiltshire, about six miles from Bath, which, with its inner court, its orchard, and several large gardens attached to it, gave ample room for the amusement of its inmates. And from a conversation which I have had with one of his few surviving contemporaries—Mr. Wellington Cooper of Lincoln's Inn—I recall the following :—

John Lawrence was tall and overgrown; I was much struck by the angular formation of his face. He was rough but kindly; hot-tempered but good-natured withal. We had a rough enough life of it at school; our bedrooms were so cold that the water used to freeze hard in the basins, and the doctor used to remark that it was no wonder that we were all in such good health, for every room had a draught in it. This was true enough. The window-frames of our bedroom were of stone, and an iron bar across the centre was supposed to prevent ingress or egress. Lawrence managed to loosen it so that it could be taken out and replaced without attracting observation, and when the nights were hot he would creep through it in his nightshirt and, reaching the ground by the help of a pear-tree which grew against the wall, would go and bathe in the neighbouring stream. We were fast friends, and in the kindness of his

heart he would have done anything for me. I was very fond of bird-nesting. A swallow had built its nest at the top of our chimney, and I expressed a wish to get at it. 'I'll get the eggs for you,' said John, and went straight to the chimney, and began to climb up it inside. It soon became too narrow for his burly frame. 'Never mind, I'll get them yet,' he said, and at once went to the window. I and my brother followed him through it, and, climbing a wall twelve feet high, which came out from one end of the house and formed one side of the court, pushed him up from its summit as far as we could reach towards the roof. He was in his nightshirt, with bare feet and legs; but, availing himself of any coign of vantage that he could find, he actually managed to climb up the wall of the house by himself. When he reached the roof, he crawled up the coping stones at the side on his knees, and then began to make his way along the ridge towards the chimney; but the pain by this time became too great for human endurance: 'Hang it all,' he cried, 'I can't go on!' and he had to give it up. The kindness of heart which I remember in John Lawrence at school was vividly recalled to me by an anecdote I heard of him in much later life. A governess who was taking charge of his nieces at Southgate heard that her sister, who was in poor circumstances, was ill in Paris with no one to look after her. Sir John at once wrote to the chaplain at the English Embassy to ask him to find her out, to transfer her to more comfortable quarters, and see that she had the best medical aid, at his expense.

Another Wraxall schoolfellow, the Rev. F. B. Ashley, vicar of Wooburn, Buckinghamshire, adds one or two touches which should be preserved.

Soon after Lawrence reached Wraxall he and I became great friends; and when it was decided that I was to go to India, which was his destination also, and we were given the same work, our friendship deepened and we became sworn allies. He was naturally taciturn, and I was equally so; consequently we thought rather than talked together. Once I remember his coming to me with that grand brow of his knit with the deepest indignation, and saying that the master had suspected him of something gross. I saw how the matter stood, and said, 'You are innocent, but nothing can be done except to hold up your head and show you are incapable of such baseness.' My intercourse with him was a happy period of my schoolboy life. His family had come to live at Clifton, my native place, and we were always together in the holidays. One day we had a narrow escape. We were taking a walk in holiday time beyond the hot wells at Clifton, under the rocks, in the winter. When we reached St. Vincent's, where is now the suspension bridge, we were seized with the rather mad idea of climbing to the top. The ground was covered with two or three inches of snow, and before we got very far our hands

became painfully cold as we grasped at the rocks and tufts of grass in the crevices. Soon they were quite benumbed. We tried to look back, but it was impossible to return. We glanced at each other and then made a vigorous push for it, continually *looking* to see if we had hold, for we could feel nothing, our hands being completely numbed. We arrived somehow at the top, gave rather a solemn look at each other, and without making a single remark proceeded on our walk.

The boy who thus held his tongue and thought in silence was the 'father of the man' who, as we shall see hereafter, when a telegram arrived reporting the outbreak of the Mutiny, spoke not a word, either then or on the whole of that day, to the friend and high official who was with him, but consumed his own thoughts in silence, estimating the full gravity of the crisis and pondering the methods by which he could meet and overcome it.

In 1827 came the turning point of John Lawrence's life. John Hudlestone, an old friend of the family who had risen to high office in the Madras Presidency, had, on his return to England, become a director of the East India Company and a Member of Parliament; and the influence and patronage which he thus acquired he used with a single eye for the benefit of those among whom the best years of his life had been passed. For two services in particular his name deserves to be gratefully remembered amongst them. It may, perhaps, be questioned which was the greater of the two. By his exertions in Parliament and elsewhere he did much to prepare the way for the abolition of suttee by Lord William Bentinck, and he sent the Lawrences to India.

The three elder brothers, Alexander, George, and Henry, had already received from him appointments in the Indian army, and had gone off to India, the two former in the cavalry, the latter, for 'fear lest it should be said that no Lawrence could pass for the artillery,' in the more scientific branch of the service. It was now John's turn. But, to his surprise and disgust, the appointment offered to him was an appointment not in the army, but in the Indian Civil Service. His father had been a soldier before him; so were his three elder brothers. The stories of his father's campaigns to which he had listened, the books of travel and of history which he had read, the associations of his Londonderry school,—all had combined to fill his mind with military aspirations, and now he would go to India as a soldier, or not go at all. In vain, did his father point to his scars and talk of his hard service and his scanty pension. In vain, did

Henry Lawrence, who had just returned from India invalided from the first Burmese war, and disgusted, like most young officers of his energy and capacity, with the incapacity and the red-tapeism which seemed to block the way, appeal to arguments which were likely to be of more weight in his brother's eyes—the greater field for ability, for vigour, and for usefulness which the Civil Service afforded. John Lawrence stood firm : and, had there not been an influence at home more powerful than that of either his father or brother, it is likely that he would have stuck to his determination to the end, and India, when the time came, if she had gained a great general, would have lost a still greater ruler.

How the matter ended I am able to relate in the words of an eye-witness, one of the earliest and latest friends of the Lawrences, who happened to be staying at Clifton when the knotty question had to be decided. The testimony which she gives incidentally to that paramount influence which, now and through all John Lawrence's life, moulded and stimulated him, will be observed.

John Lawrence's eldest sister (says Mrs. B——) was an extraordinary woman : strong of mind and of will, quick in apprehension, yet sound and sober in judgment, refined and cultured, with a passionate enthusiasm for all that was 'pure and lovely, and of good report.' In a word, hers was a nature possessed by the highest qualities of her soldier brothers, in combination with feminine gentleness and goodness. She had enjoyed varied advantages in the society in which her lot was occasionally cast. At the house of Mr. Hudlestone, among other distinguished men, she had often met Wilberforce and the Thorntons, and had quietly drunk in their wit and conversation from the sofa to which, as an invalid, she was long confined. Perhaps her brother Henry, who more nearly resembled her in character and disposition, was most amenable to her influence; but John, too, though the greater independence of character manifested in his after life was early developed, cherished what might be called, without exaggeration, a boundless reverence for all she said and thought. In the present stern conflict between duty and inclination the family 'oracle' was lovingly resorted to. The scene in Letitia's room can never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. It may have been the crisis in John's life. He was seated at the foot of the invalid's couch in earnest debate about the perplexing gift. With all the vehemence of his ardent boy nature, as if to leave no doubt as to his own decided prepossessions, and, perhaps, with a bold effort to win the assent which he felt to be indispensable, he exclaimed, 'A soldier I was born, and a soldier I will be!' The prudent counsellor, however, advised differently. She urged him without hesitation to accept the boon, as affording in every way advan-

tages unknown to the military life. Other influences no doubt conspired with hers to induce him to make what was, to his own personal feelings and aspirations, a great self-sacrifice, but it was to Letitia's calm advice and good judgment that he reluctantly but bravely yielded. She may be said, indeed, to have turned the scales, and thus in a measure determined an illustrious future.

Dean Merivale, the distinguished author of the 'History of the Romans under the Empire,' is said to boast that he, in truth, saved India, though he never saw it! He may well do so; for he was offered and declined the nomination to Haileybury, which, on his refusal, fell to John Lawrence. To Haileybury, accordingly, John Lawrence went, while Ashley, his Wraxall friend, had to go to Addiscombe without him. The East India College at Haileybury, whatever may have been its shortcomings, did a noble work in its day, and one for which, as it appears to me, no adequate substitute has yet been found. It gave an *esprit de corps*, and a unity of purpose, it laid the foundations of lasting friendships, and stimulated a generous ambition among those who were about to be engaged in one of the grandest tasks which has fallen to the youth of any country or any age. It was then in good hands. Dr. Joseph Hallet Batten, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and an excellent classical scholar, as well as a high wrangler, was the Principal, and with him worked an able staff of professors. Among them were the Rev. C. W. Le Bas, who was dean and professor of mathematics; the Rev. Henry Walter, who had been second wrangler, professor of natural history and chemistry, one of the cleverest and most genial of men; W. Empson, who had lately succeeded Sir James Mackintosh in the professorship of law, and was afterwards to become son-in-law to Francis Jeffrey, and editor of the 'Edinburgh Review,' and the Rev. T. R. Malthus, the celebrated political economist, who was professor of that science and also of history. Among the Oriental staff, to whom the students were indebted for such knowledge of Arabic, Sanscrit, Persian, Hindustani, Bengali, Telegu, as they could pick up in the scanty time afforded for the learning of those languages, should be specially mentioned Mirza Ibrahim, an accomplished scholar, and, in every point of view, a remarkable man.

It will readily be believed that so distinguished a staff of professors drew to Haileybury as visitors some of the best known men in the country, and the house of Malthus, in particular, was the resort of philosophers and statesmen from all parts of Europe. On the other

hand, it seems pretty clear that the professorial staff was too good for the material on which it had to work—youths of from sixteen to eighteen years of age. They sometimes lectured over their pupils' heads, and, in India, it was a common remark among thinking civilians that the Haileybury course would have been as invaluable as it would have been eagerly sought after, if only it could have been offered to them at a later period of their career.

John's elder brother, Henry, accompanied him with parental care on his first visit to the College, on July 22, 1827, and, anxious and energetic as usual, walked up and down the library with him, busily explaining some rather recondite matters which he thought might be useful in the impending examination. But John was less eager to receive than Henry to impart information, and an anxious parent, observing what was passing, begged Henry to transfer his attentions to his son. Henry complied. The questions which he discussed were duly asked in the papers which followed, and to the help thus given his grateful pupil attributed his success in the examination. John, on his part, took a respectable place, but nothing more.

At that time, the demand in India for young civilians was so great that the usual period of residence at Haileybury—four terms, or two years—was reduced by half, or even more, provided the candidate was eighteen years of age, and was able to pass the necessary examinations 'with distinction.' This latter condition John was able to fulfil at the end of his first year ; but, being only seventeen, he was compelled to remain at Haileybury a second year, and to see some twenty of his contemporaries pass out before him. During these two years he was 'neither very idle nor very industrious.' He managed to gain some prizes and medals, but not in such numbers as to attract the attention of those about him, or in any way to indicate his brilliant future. In his second term, he carried off the prize for history and another for his knowledge of Bengali. In his third term, he won another prize for Bengali, and was second in political economy. In his fourth and last term, he gained a third prize for Bengali—a language of which the future Punjabi was not destined to make much use—and the gold medal for law. The highest immediate aim of an industrious and ambitious Haileybury student was to pass out the first of his term to his own Presidency, a distinction gained by Charles Trevelyan about two years before. John Lawrence passed out third for Bengal, a position with which his friends and he himself were well satisfied.

Among the more distinguished of his contemporaries at Haileybury were John Thornton, afterwards well known as secretary to James Thomason, the eminent Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces; Edward Thornton, his brother, who was afterwards one of the ablest lieutenants of John Lawrence in the Punjab and was brought into the closest contact with him in the most critical period of his life, the dark days of 1857; Michael P. Edgeworth, also a Punjab Commissioner; Martin Gubbins, the well-known Commissioner of Oude; William Frere, who rose to be Member of the Bombay Council; John Muir, who, at an early age, succeeded in winning a European reputation as a profound Sanscrit scholar; Donald Macleod, one of Lawrence's most trusted assistants in the Punjab, and one of his dearest friends; and, finally, J. H. Batten, son of the Principal, and afterwards well-known as Commissioner of Kumaon. Batten entered Haileybury on the same day as John Lawrence; it was to him that John Lawrence specially applied his familiar term of 'comrade,' and it is to his aid that I am indebted for many of the details which I am able to give of the Haileybury of that day.

There were few among those whose names I have mentioned who did not seem likely to distinguish themselves in India at least as much as John Lawrence. It is significant of the rather faint impression which he managed to make upon his contemporaries that the one fact which Edward Thornton is able to recall about him is his having often seen his somewhat remarkable form planted in the centre of the doorway leading from the quadrangle into the reading-room—a fact which he charitably inclines to interpret as implying that John Lawrence frequented the reading-room rather than the playing-ground. And it is, perhaps, more characteristic, and certainly more amusing, to hear that Batten, having struck up a friendship with the future Governor-General, was often told by his father, the Principal, that he was sorry to see him 'loafing about with that tall Irishman instead of sticking to the more regular students.'

The pressure put upon those who were not disposed to work on their own account was never great. Lectures were over at one P.M. and the rest of the day was pretty much at the disposal of the students. The college was situated in the midst of an open heath where fine air was to be had for the asking. It was a country where it 'seemed always afternoon'—'a place,' says Sir Charles Trevelyan, 'eminently suited for roaming and sauntering,' an occupation which seems to

have fallen in with John Lawrence's tastes, but was often varied by visits, which were neither allowed nor forbidden, to the three neighbouring towns of Hertford, Ware, and Hoddesdon, which lay at an equal and easy distance from the college. Of John Lawrence's general characteristics and mode of life under such circumstances I am able to give a good notion in the words of his friend J. H. Batten.

John Lawrence was, in appearance, rugged and uncouth, but his tall gaunt figure was sufficiently set off by an intelligent face and by his high good humour. He did not much affect general society; and though, like others, he sometimes 'rode in the dilly' to Ware or Hertford, he, on the whole, preferred mooning about the quadrangle and the reading-room, or wandering over the wild neighbouring heath, not uncommonly varying the game of fives at the college racquet-court by one of skittles or bowls or quoits behind the 'College Arms;' and the bad beer procured at this and neighbouring hostels was often recalled, not without regret, in after life by the exiles of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay. Lawrence, at that time, displayed a good deal of the Irish element, and he with his intimate friend Charles Todd—who died after a short career in India—first initiated me into the mysteries sacred to St. Patrick's Day, Hallowe'en, the glorious, pious, and immortal memory of King William, the 'prentice-boys of Derry, &c. By a stupid and inexcusable failure in Bengali, I managed to come out only sixth in my last term, while Lawrence was third. But it was a failure which enables me to record a characteristic anecdote. On that great final day of our Collegiate career, the 28th of May, 1829, my father, the Principal, was in high good humour, for, in spite of the disaster just described, I had delivered before a rather brilliant audience in the hall a prize essay on 'The Power of the Romans in the West compared with the British in the East;' and going up with pretended anger to John Lawrence, he said good humouredly, 'Oh, you rascal, you have got out ahead of my son;' to which, with ready wit, Lawrence replied, 'Ah, Dr. Batten, you see it's all *conduct*; I fear Hallet has not been quite so steady as I;' thus turning the tables on the Principal, who, to Lawrence's knowledge, had more than once remonstrated on my 'loafing about with that tall Irishman.'

This brings me to another anecdote. When I was at home, on furlough, during what turned out to be the Mutiny year (1857), I went to Brighton to pay my respects to Mr. Le Bas, who had, long since, retired from the Haileybury Principalship, in which he succeeded my father. Those who knew the man, with his sharp peculiar voice, and his hand to his ear, can easily imagine the scene. He called out to me, 'Hallet, who is this John Lawrence of whom I hear so much?' to which I replied, 'Don't you remember a tall, thin Irishman with whom I much consorted,

who once kept an Irish revel of bonfirés on the grass plot opposite to Letter C; and whom you forgave on account of his Orange zeal and his fun?' 'Aha!' said the old dean, 'I remember the man; not a bad sort of fellow;' and then he burst into one of his fits of laughter, ending with the dry remark, 'But what has become of all our *good* students?'

A letter from Sir Charles Trevelyan, who preceded John Lawrence at Haileybury by two years, adds a few touches which should be preserved:—

The great charm of Haileybury was its thoroughly rural surroundings. I have known students stand at the college gate for half-an-hour together in the evening, listening to the nightingales in the adjoining woods. Bathing in the Lea in the Rye-House meadows was a great amusement in the summer; while, in winter, I remember a match at football between the students of the two upper and two lower terms, which lasted over several days and, finally, had to be given up on account of the antagonistic spirit it elicited. But in all seasons we used to take long walks in every direction. Athletic exercises were not in vogue in those days as they are now, and if these were less than the average at Haileybury, it was owing to the attractions of the open and pleasant country in which it was situated. The dissipation for which some of the students were most notorious was tandem-driving. I remember an occurrence connected with it which amused me at the time, and may be still worth repeating. Two students, driving a tandem, met Dean Le Bas on the road, and knowing that they would be sent for, they considered together what they would say. When the remonstance came they justified themselves by saying, 'Why, sir, there is no harm in driving two horses abreast, and why then should it be wrong to drive them one in front of the other?' To this Le Bas whistled out in his peculiar way, with ready presence of mind, 'Sir, a tandem carries dissipation on the face of it;' which is, perhaps, as much as could be said against it.

It may be added that the excellent public school which has now taken the place of the old India College at Haileybury has done honour to itself by letting into the wall of the room C 54, which he formerly occupied, a brass plate with the words, 'John Lawrence, 1829,' engraved upon it; while, among the dormitories which have received the names of Haileybury students who afterwards distinguished themselves in India, such as Trevelyan, Edmonstone, Thomason, Bartle Frere, and Colvin, or of distinguished Principals of the old college, such as Batten, Le Bas, Melvill, there is none which bears so illustrious a name—a name known, as Macaulay would say, to every schoolboy—as that which is called after the Chief Commis-

sioner of the Punjab and the Governor-General of India—'John Lawrence.'

At the close of each summer and winter term during his residence at Haileybury, John Lawrence regularly repaired to the house of Mr. Stevens, an old friend of the family, in Chelsea, for a week or ten days, before going down to his home at Clifton ; and in general harmony with the account I have given of his college life is a second contribution of Mrs. B., a daughter of Mr. Stevens, and a life-long friend of John Lawrence. It is worth preserving, as it enables us to see something, even at this early period, of the inner and gentler side of his rough character.

Every remembrance (says Mrs. B.) of the days and weeks he passed at our house at Chelsea is bright and pleasant. They are associated with a hilarity, indeed an exuberance of innocent glee, to which he himself, to his latest years, talking of our house as the 'elastic house,' loved to refer. He gave pleasure to every one. Even Henry, with his quiet reserved nature, regarded with quiet complacency the frolics of his young brother ; and a venerable Scotch lady, unaccustomed to such ebullitions, yet unable to resist their fascination, could venture on no severer stricture than—it was from her a compliment—'He is a diamond, though a rough one.'

No work was done while he was in the house, and the 'impositions,' inflicted for some freak at the college, were handed over to the junior members of our household, who copied the necessary Persian character as best they could. I well remember the goodly number of prize volumes which he brought in his portmanteau from term to term. Speaking of these, he would say, 'They are Letitia's books ; they are all hers ; I should not have had one of them but for her. I work with her in my mind ; she shall have every one of them.' The same declaration of brotherly gratitude was made in connection with the highest honour that Haileybury could bestow—the gold medal ; and when he got to Clifton, he was soon at the foot of the old couch with the grateful tribute : 'Take them,' he said, 'they are all won by you.'

CHAPTER II.

LIFE AT DELHI. 1829-1834.

WE have now followed, with the help of such scanty records as are, at this distance of time, recoverable, the career of John Lawrence during the first eighteen years of his life. They are in no way especially remarkable. He has passed through three schools and the East India College at Haileybury without their leaving any very distinctive mark on him, or he on them. He has been crossed in the darling wish of his heart, to follow the profession of his father and three elder brothers. The one relative whom we have seen to possess an extraordinary influence over him has used it to shape—possibly, as it may have seemed to him to thwart—his destinies, and he leaves her behind him on the couch of an invalid. Strong, rough, warm-hearted, self-reliant, full of exuberant merriment, half-disciplined, and little more than half-educated, with the Irish element in his character, at this period, distinctly overshadowing the Scotch, he leaves his father's home hardly expecting to see him again, for a profession which he would never have sought, and for which he deems he has no special aptitude. Scores, nay, hundreds, of young civilians must have started for India with lighter hearts and with hopes apparently better founded than his.

With him there went out his elder brother, Henry, who had already seen five years of India and Indian campaigning, and had been driven back to England before his time, fever-stricken and 'so reduced,' as an entry in his mother's diary puts it, 'by sickness and suffering, that he looked more than double his age.' John Hudlestone, the kind friend who had given the elder brothers, one after the other, their appointments in India, had indeed consoled Henry's broken-hearted sister when he first left the parental home, by saying to her, 'All your brothers will, I think, do well, but Henry has so much steadiness and resolution that you will see him come back a

general. He will be "Sir Henry Lawrence" before he dies.' But no kind friend, so far as I can discover, ventured on a like prediction with respect to John. That *he* would be 'Sir John Lawrence' before he died would have seemed unlikely enough to the most sanguine of his friends, or the most appreciative of his Haileybury tutors. But that he would be a chief instrument in the saving of India, that he would be Governor-General, that he would die 'Lord Lawrence of the Punjab,' would have seemed as absurd and as incredible as the prediction in the nursery story to young Dick Whittington, that he would, one day, become Lord Mayor, nay, thrice Lord Mayor, of London.

John Lawrence passed out of Haileybury in May 1829, but he lingered on some four months longer in England, that he might have the 'benefit of his brother Henry's society on his voyage out.' 'Henry's presence in England,' he says himself, 'during the time I was at Haileybury, had been of considerable advantage to me. He went down to the first examination with me, and stimulated me to exertion while I was there.' It seems strange in these days of whirlwind locomotion when a man is thankful to be allowed to leave his post in India, on short furlough, and, after spending a month with his friends at home, is back at his work again before his three months are up, to find that John Lawrence spent four months in England merely that he might have the 'benefit of his brother's company during the voyage.' But there were no steamers in those days. Worse still, there was no Overland Route, and the voyage to India round the Cape was sometimes a matter, as the brothers were to find to their cost, of five months and more.

They sailed from Portsmouth on September 2, 1829, accompanied by Honoria, the sister who came between them in point of age. John suffered terribly, as he always did in later life, from sea-sickness. It was six weeks before he could leave his berth. At one time, as he often used to tell, his life was all but despaired of; and a terrible hurricane off the south of Africa showed that the 'Cape of Storms' was still true to its character. But in the intervals of comparative comfort the two brothers studied hard at the native languages, for which neither had a turn, but which each knew to be indispensable for a life of usefulness in India. They did not reach Calcutta till February 9, 1830, and here they separated, Henry, to join his company of Foot Artillery at Kurnal, a large military station to the north of Delhi, on what was then our north-west frontier; John, to

complete in the College of Fort William such study of the native languages as was necessary before he could enter on his civil duties. It may be of some interest to remark here that, in the same year with John Lawrence, there went out to India two remarkable men—Alexander Duff, the first missionary of the Church of Scotland, who 'set to work almost in the next street to him,' and Sir Henry Durand, who, some forty years later, was to become Foreign Secretary and afterwards colleague in Council of the young 'writer' who would then have risen to be Governor-General.

During the whole time that John Lawrence was in the College of Fort William he was more or less ill. The climate did not agree with him. He took little care of himself, and he was so much depressed in spirits that he thought seriously of returning to England. He has often been heard to say since that an offer of 100*l.* a year in England in those dark days would have taken him straight home. The society of the capital, with the brilliant carriages on its Mall, its morning and evening canters over the Maidan, its balls and its dinner-parties, so acceptable to most young civilians, seems to have had no charms for him; and perhaps the rough, downright young Irishman, who then, as ever afterwards, cared nothing for appearances, would have made little way with the society of the capital. A pining for home and friends such as I have described, and an absolute detestation of India, has been no uncommon thing, even among those who, like John Lawrence, were destined afterwards to find the most appropriate field for their talents, and to rise to the highest eminence there. Not even ambition and the charms of a 'study of the native languages' are proof against the depressing influences and enervating vapours of the City of Palaces at a time when the thermometer is standing at ninety degrees in the shade. Robert Clive, in sudden accesses of home-sickness, twice over, it is said, while he was a tenant of Writers' Buildings, at Madras, attempted to destroy himself; and it was not until he had assured himself that the pistol, which had refused to go off, was properly loaded, that he determined to bear up against his depression, as a man reserved for something great. Charles, afterwards Lord, Metcalfe, for a whole year after his arrival in India, plied his father with piteous appeals to obtain for him the veriest pittance in England in exchange for the miseries of exile. So we need not be surprised if John Lawrence passed through a similar slough of despond. At last he managed to pass the necessary examinations in Urdu and Persian, of which latter language

he remained ever afterwards a colloquial master; and then, instead of applying for a post in one of the more settled and peaceful provinces of Lower Bengal, where the work would, comparatively speaking, be one of routine, he was, at his own request, gazetted for Delhi.[1] This application, as we shall see, gave some slight intimation of the stuff of which he was made. There was now no more inaction, no more halting between two opinions. He had put his hand to the plough and there was no looking back. He shook himself, like Samson, and awoke to his work. From the present moment to the very end of his official life, we shall find no parallel to the inaction of the four months spent in England before leaving it for India, or to the depression which seems to have dominated him during the ten months he spent in Calcutta before embarking in his active work. There was, henceforth, no nervous looking forward to what might be, or backward to what might have been. To do the thing that lay before him, to do it thoroughly, to do it with all his might, not regarding the consequences and not turning either to the right hand or the left—this was, henceforward, the ruling principle of his life, and to that ruling principle who shall say how much of his success was owing?

A breathing space of some months was usually allowed to young civilians, after passing their examination, before they were expected to be at their post. But John Lawrence was off to his at once. The method of travelling usual in those days was the comparatively easy one of 'trek' up the Ganges. But John preferred the more rapid mode of palanquin dawk, and managed to accomplish the distance of nine hundred miles in eighteen days. The motives which induced

[1] I have not thought it desirable or practicable, in a work which quotes so largely from documents of a bygone generation, and deals with events which ought to stereotype for ever, in the memories of Englishmen, the names of so many Indian places in the form in which they were then known, to attempt any accurate system of transliteration. It is difficult to a biographer of John Lawrence, steeped as he must necessarily be in the writings of his time, even to think of Delhi as 'Dilhí,' of Ferozepore as 'Firozpúr,' of Cawnpore as 'Káhnpúr,' of Lucknow as 'Lakhnao.' To him the capital of the Moguls can never be otherwise than Delhi, and the capital of Oude must always remain Lucknow. I have, therefore, in the case of the more important names of men and places which occur repeatedly in the letters and life of John Lawrence, thought it best to adhere to the spelling of the time rather than to follow the more accurate system of spelling and of accentuation which has been adopted by a later generation.

him to select the Delhi district as his first field of action are not far to seek. It was not that the work would be easy and straightforward, or the inhabitants tractable and submissive. On the contrary, the work was as arduous and exacting, and the inhabitants as turbulent and warlike, as could have been found within the Company's dominions. But, for this very reason, it was likely to afford the best preparation for whatever might come afterwards.

And now that we have followed John Lawrence to the great city which, with the surrounding district, is, for the next thirteen years, to prove so admirable a training ground for his great, but, hitherto, quite undeveloped capacities, and, some twenty-five years later, is to witness the crowning achievement of his life—its recapture from the mutineers—it will be well to take just such a brief retrospect of its history and antecedents as may enable us better to understand the extent to which the peculiarities of the place and the people acted on him, and his energy and determination reacted on them.

Historically and geographically, Delhi is the most important city in Hindustan. Situated on the river Jumna, in the very centre of Northern India, it is brought, by the help of the Ganges, into which the Jumna flows, and of the vast network of canals which Mogul and English enterprise have spread over the country, into direct communication with almost every city of note between it and the Bay of Bengal. It stands on the direct line of advance into Northern and Central India from the passes of the Hindu Kush and the Suliman mountains—the only point of the compass, it should be remarked, from which an invasion of India need ever be seriously contemplated. Its inhabitants, spirited, energetic, and fanatical, contrast equally with the soft and supple Bengali, on the one side, and the ferocious and haughty and untameable Afghan on the other. Altogether the spot seems marked out by Nature herself as that whereon, once and again, the battle for the Empire of India would be lost or won. Its history and its traditions stretch right back to the fifteenth century B.C., when, under the name of Indra-Prastha, it was deemed worthy of a place in the Sanscrit Epic of the 'Mahabharata.' Since that time, on the same, or nearly the same, spot, city after city has been founded, has risen to opulence and power, or even to empire, and then has fallen by slow decay, or, as has more often happened, has been stamped out of existence by the heel of the destroyer. The *débris* of these cities of the dead cover an area of forty-five square

miles, and towards one end of this vast space rises the city of the living, the foundation of the Emperor Shah Jehan.

Turk and Tartar, Persian and Pathan, Mogul and Mahratta, have swept down upon Delhi in ghastly succession, have plundered it of its wealth, massacred its inhabitants, levelled its buildings with the ground, or, again, have made it the seat of a long dynasty of kings, and lavished upon it all the magnificence and gorgeousness of the East. There is thus hardly a great name in the history of Northern India which is not, in some way, connected with Delhi, as founder or conqueror, embellisher or destroyer. In the eleventh century, Mahmud the Iconoclast, on his return to Afghanistan from his frequent incursions into India, adorned his palace at Ghuzni not less with the jewels of Delhi than with the sandal-wood gates of Somnath. In the twelfth, Mohammed of Ghor made it what, with few intermissions, it has ever since remained, the capital of Mohammedan India, and planted upon its throne as his vassals the famous dynasty of 'Slave' kings. In the fourteenth, Tamerlane, the arch-destroyer, plundered, depopulated, and destroyed it. It was at Delhi that Baber was proclaimed emperor, and at Delhi that Humayun was buried. The site of Delhi, Shah Jehan, the master builder of a whole dynasty of builders, the architect of those wonders of the world, the Pearl Mosque and the Taj Mehal, selected for the capital of his Empire, in preference even to that of Agra, and, rebuilding the city from the ground, called it after his own name 'Shah Jehanabad' (*cir.* 1656). In the eighteenth century Nadir Shah, the great Persian invader, treated its inhabitants and its movable wealth much as Tamerlane had dealt with them before him, and what little of revenue or power he left to its titular ruler was afterwards appropriated by the Mahrattas. The great Mogul became a mere puppet in their hands, and, in the beginning of the present century (1803), he passed under the gentler sway of that 'company' of merchants who throve and trafficked and ruled in Leadenhall Street, but could, at their pleasure, command the services and unsheath the swords of generals as redoubtable as Clive and Coote, as Lake and Wellesley.

When Lord Lake entered the city of the Moguls, after his surprising series of victories, he found the venerable emperor 'oppressed by the accumulated calamities of old age, and degraded authority, extreme poverty, and loss of sight, seated under a small tattered canopy, the remnant of his royal state.' But the English conquerors, touched, as they could not fail to be, by such a pitiable sight, treated

Shah Alum with that respectful sympathy which, whatever their faults, they have seldom failed to show to fallen greatness. They gave him back his palace, one of the most splendid creations of Shah Jehan, and set apart extensive districts in the neighbourhood of the city for the proper maintenance of him and of his court. The management of these districts they wisely kept under their own control; but a lac of rupees (10,000*l.*)—a sum which was afterwards considerably increased—was poured, month by month, into the lap of the blind and helpless old man. Within his palace, a building strong enough and vast enough to house an army as well as a court, he was to reign supreme.

Less than this the English could hardly, with any show of justice or generosity, have done; and yet it may be doubted whether even this was not more than the best interests of the venerable puppet himself, or of the miserable creatures who infested and disgraced the purlieus of his court, demanded. 'The Vatican and a garden' was indeed the 'irreducible minimum' which the discrowned head of the Catholic Church could well have been expected to accept from the ruler of one of the most Catholic of nations. But a palace and the revenues of a palace left to an Eastern king, who has none of the duties and—owing to the protection guaranteed to him by a greater power from without—none of the salutary fears of royalty, is likely, as our dear-bought experience in India has proved again and again, to become a pest-house doubly steeped in debauchery and corruption. It is a despotism, tempered neither by epigrams nor by assassination.

But the English, in their generosity to the fallen king, went beyond even this. By a cruel kindness, which was more creditable to their hearts than their heads, they restored to the decrepit descendant of Tamerlane his titular sovereignty over the whole of the vast regions which had been conquered or claimed by his ancestors. True, it was only the shadow of empire that they gave him; but, in the East, a shadow, a remembrance, a symbol, has often proved to possess more vitality, and to be more real even than the reality which it was supposed to represent. One or two of our wiser statesmen shook their heads, and tried by gradual encroachments insensibly to minimise the imperial pageantry. But their efforts were only partially successful. The first British Resident, a kind-hearted and generous man, continued to approach this phantom of royalty with knee-worship, which the most supple of courtiers might have disdained to use in approach-

ing a European sovereign. Successive Governors-General or their representatives offered him nuzzurs, or presents, which, to the native mind in general, and, certainly, to that of the old king himself, must have suggested that he, and not they, was the paramount power in India. The current coin of the country continued to bear, not indeed the image—for that no good Muslim would allow—but the superscription and year of the reign of the Great Mogul. Native sovereigns looked upon themselves, nay even upon the English conquerors, rather as tenants-at-will than as proprietors, and felt insecure upon their thrones till the fountain of sovereignty had recognised their claim to their territories or their titles. And so Resident succeeded Resident, Seton gave way to Metcalfe, Metcalfe to Ochterlony, and then Ochterlony to Metcalfe again, at the Residency house; Shah Alum was succeeded by Akbar Shah in the palace, and Bahadur Shah expected, in due course, to succeed Akbar; and, though some of the more obnoxious obeisances and privileges accorded to the Mogul were gradually lopped away, yet the fundamental mischief went on unchecked.

If it be true that, during the anarchy which accompanied the break-up of the Mogul power, the imperial city had become the sink for the rascality of all the surrounding countries, it is equally true that now, under the ægis of the English protection, the imperial palace became the sink of the city. In the city itself, and in the adjoining country, English rule was rapidly introducing law and order and security for property, for honour and for life. But within the walls of the palace, though murder and torture may have been checked from fear of the Resident, there was the same dreary round of extravagance and profligacy, jealousy, and intrigue; still the same miserable inhabitants, a motley crowd of panders and informers, concubines, and eunuchs. Nor was it possible for the Resident to do more than to enter a feeble protest against the libertinism to which the English Government itself had, with the best intentions in the world, given a charter. If the phantom of Mogul sovereignty became every day more contemptible, and the torch of the Mogul Empire seemed to be dying out with a last expiring flicker, it was not dead yet, and might, with that very expiring flicker, blaze forth into a conflagration which would envelop the whole of India. So thought one or two of the wisest of our countrymen then; and so, wise after the event thinks every one now.

Such, then, were the antecedents and such the general condition

of the imperial city when, early in 1831, John Lawrence arrived as one of the 'assistants' to the Resident; and it is not difficult to infer from what I have already said how profound an influence the profligacy of the court and the corruption of the aristocracy on the one hand, and the patient sufferings and the sterling qualities of the masses of the people on the other, must have had upon the whole of his subsequent career—at a time, that is, when it would be his no longer to obey but to be obeyed, no longer to observe but to act, no longer to chafe at abuses but to sweep them clean away.

The town and district of Delhi had been placed, ever since the time of its conquest from the Mahrattas by Lord Lake, under the control of a British officer, who bore the title of 'Resident and Chief Commissioner.' The post was one which demanded and developed high qualities, and its varied duties were indicated by the unusual title borne by its occupant. It had twice been filled by Charles Metcalfe, who, fortified by the experience thence derived, was now rising, as John Lawrence was himself to rise from it, in later days, by rapid strides towards much higher dignities, and was not to die till he had been, in rapid succession, supreme governor of India itself, of Jamaica, and of Canada.

The post of Resident of Delhi was, at that time, held by Thomas Theophilus Metcalfe, a younger brother of Sir Charles. The work was, partly, what is called in India 'political,' partly, administrative. The 'political' duties of the Resident brought him, primarily, into contact with the Mogul and his palace, but they also made his influence felt over the vast range of country which lies between Malwa on the south-east and the Punjab on the north-west. They thus embraced those numerous states, the appanages of the oldest and proudest and most powerful Rajpoot chiefs, which, together with intervening tracts of desert, make up the district called by a geographical fiction, as if it were a united whole, Rajpootana. They included also the 'protected Sikh states' of Jheend, Puttiala, Khytul, and Nabha, which, with numerous smaller chieftainships, were interlaced in a perplexing manner with the British territory.

In his civil capacity as 'Commissioner' in the purely British territory, the Resident had to keep order, to administer justice, to superintend the apportionment and collection of the revenue, and to develop, as far as practicable, the resources of a very imperfectly developed country. His assistants, who were four or five in number, usually lived, like the members of one family, in the Residency house

or compound, and, after they had served their first apprenticeship, were liable to be employed in any of the various duties which belonged to the Resident himself. They thus managed, at a very early stage of their career, to combine the functions of magistrate, collector, and judge.

The Delhi district, happily for all concerned, was a non-regulation province. In spite of successive waves of foreign conquest which had swept over it, the native institutions had been less changed here than in almost any other part of India. The venerable village communities remained intact, and the cue of the English officers was, happily, not to destroy, but to preserve and make the best of them. That 'mystery of iniquity,' as it has been well called by Sir John Kaye, the law of sales for arrears of rent, had not been introduced into the Delhi territory, and justice was administered not so much by hard and fast regulations, as on principles of natural equity. It is thus not too much to say that every 'assistant' to the Resident, owing to the variety of his work, the liberty he was allowed, and the sense of responsibility which was thus developed, enjoyed almost unique facilities for showing what was in him.

Among the 'assistants' in 1831 was Charles Trevelyan, who by his energy, his ability, and his fearlessness, had already, in his subordinate capacity, made a great name. Amidst all but universal obloquy, he had struck boldly at corruption in high places, and at last, amidst all but universal appreciation, he had levelled it with the ground, never again, it is to be hoped, to rear its head. He found a kindred spirit in the newly arrived John Lawrence, whom he had himself been instrumental in attracting thither; and thus began a friendship which lasted without intermission for nearly fifty years, till death ended or put the seal to it. The two friends did not remain long together now, for Trevelyan was called off, in the following year, to Bhurtpore, while John Lawrence remained behind in the city with which so much of his career was to be bound up.

The impression, however, made by the younger man, who had not yet done a stroke of professional work in India, upon the elder, was distinct enough, and has, after the lapse of some fifty years, in conversation with myself, been thus vividly recalled: 'When I first saw John Lawrence he was, in appearance, singularly like what he was in advanced life; nay, he looked, in a manner, older than in after life: the lines in his face were even deeper. He had a hungry, anxious, look. He seemed to be of a mercurial disposition. I do not mean

that he had instability or the faults of the Irish character, but he was earnest and restless. For example, he was very fond of riding, and he always appeared to be riding at a hand gallop. Here was the foundation for a man of action. I did not seek for or detect any signs of what is ordinarily called "superiority" or greatness then, but, looking back now, I can see that what I did notice was capable of a much higher interpretation than I put upon it.'

John Lawrence's first appointment under the Resident was that of 'assistant judge, magistrate, and collector' of the city and its environs—over an area, that is, of some 800 square miles, and a population of about 500,000 souls. Of this total the city itself contained some 200,000, and with their narrow round of interests and occupations, and their petty crimes and quarrels, the work of the assistant magistrate would be principally concerned. The city population consisted of many different elements. The capital of Mohammedan India of course contained a large number of Indian Mohammedans, but the larger portion was composed of Hindus, with an admixture of Sikhs and Afghans.

The general insecurity of life and property at Delhi during the break up of the Mogul and the rise of the Mahratta power, had drawn thither, by a natural process of agglomeration, most of the stormy spirits of Northern and Central India. The criminal class in such a population would necessarily be large, and it was not unfrequently recruited by a reinforcement of arch criminals from the sanctuary of the palace. Within that sanctuary the English magistrates were powerless. Slavery, polygamy, and concubinage—those inseparable adjuncts of Oriental despotism—reigned unmolested. The Sullateen, or princes of the blood, 'men who feared neither God nor man, and whom no one outside the palace would trust for a rupee,' revelled within it in extravagance and lust and infamy of every description. Sometimes a pair of half-naked slave girls, with the marks of stripes upon their backs, would escape from the windows of their gilded prison-house, and the Resident or his assistants would have the satisfaction of declaring to the pursuing myrmidons of the palace, that, having once touched British soil, they were free. Within the palace all the offices and all the etiquette of the old Mogul court were still scrupulously preserved. Sometimes one of these dignitaries, forgetful even of the honour that reigns among thieves, would turn his sharp practices upon his brother ministers. On other occasions—as in an incident related to me by Sir Charles Trevelyan—they ventured to

use the ill-gotten experience and facilities for crime acquired within the palace in the more extended field of the city. The titular Lord Chancellor, or his equivalent, had set up, outside the palace, a regular factory for forging deeds. It was an easy task, for he possessed, in virtue of his office, the entire series of seals belonging to the former Emperors and their chief officers. The existence of this factory was perfectly well known in the city, and even respectable men, when they found that the titles to their lands were disputed, resorted to it to get them set right by forgery. One day a vakil of the Raja of Bullubghur reported at the Residency that the ex-Chancellor was at that moment forging the grant of a village in his master's territory. The kotwal was sent with a *posse comitatus* to the place, and found the operation actually going on, and the ex-Chancellor, who had in his possession at least a hundred seals of former Hakims of Delhi, was condemned to five years' labour on the public roads.

The capture of Delhi by the mutineers, twenty-six years later, has been to the history of the Delhi district, on a small scale, what the burning of Rome by the Gauls was to the whole course of Roman history. Nearly all the contemporary records of the times of which I am writing perished in the flames. But even in the absence of these, as well as of all private letters, knowing as we do how John Lawrence felt and acted in after times, we can easily imagine the zest with which he would have flung himself into adventures of the knight-errant kind when they came in his way—his rescue of a slave girl from her tormentors, or the arrest and punishment of a scoundrel born in the purple, the moment that he dared to carry his malpractices beyond the charmed circle of the palace walls.

But the occupations of the assistant magistrate were not all of this exciting character, nor was his intercourse confined to the criminal classes. 'In those days,' says John Lawrence, 'many of the chiefs about Delhi still held houses and gardens in the city, to which they constantly resorted; partly, to pay their respects to the representative of British power, and partly, to enjoy the pleasures and luxuries of social life. There were then living also in Delhi old men of rank and family, who had served in one capacity or other in the late wars; men who had been employed in the irregular fashion under Sir Arthur Wellesley or Lord Lake, men who used to be fond of telling stories of those interesting times, and to whom the names of Mr. Seton, the first Resident, of Sir Charles Metcalfe, of Sir David Ochterlony, and of Sir John Malcolm were as household words.' Storytellers such as

these found an excellent listener in John Lawrence, who, a still better storyteller himself, doubtless, often retaliated in kind ; and thus, in his very first post, gathered an amount of experience such as, in other parts of India, could only have been acquired very gradually. He thus came to know the family histories of the chiefs, their feelings and their wishes, their merits and their faults—a knowledge which afterwards stood him in excellent stead when he had to deal, on a wider scale, as responsible ruler, with dispossessed or discontented Sikh chieftains scattered over a newly conquered province.

John Lawrence remained at Delhi for nearly four years, 'working regularly and steadily without any change or intermission.' Once indeed he joined a hog-hunting expedition given by Trevelyan on an extensive scale in some large tamarisk jungles on the banks of the Jumna ; and, once or twice, he paid hasty visits to his brother George, who was then entertaining, at his house at Kurnal, Henry Lawrence and the sister (Honoria) who had come out to India with them. On March 6, 1831, Henry had written from Kurnal to his sister Letitia at home, 'You may imagine how glad we are that John has got himself appointed to Delhi. He is now within a few hours of us and in very good hands ; on my return to Kurnal at the end of the month he will come over.' And it is pleasant to read in a letter written to me, and dated 'February 18, 1880, Brighton,' from Honoria (now Mrs. Barton), the sister concerned, how these anticipations of the family were fulfilled : 'During the fifteen months that we lived with our brother George at Kurnal, John occasionally visited us, and made us very happy. He seemed quite satisfied with his position at Delhi, and liked his work, and we knew that he had warm friends in the Commissioner and his family.' It may be mentioned that, much as he liked the Commissioner, he did not, like the other 'assistants,' live in the Residency compound, but in a separate house, a mile and a-half off, with a chaplain of the name of Everest, with whom he had struck up a friendship. Nor is it without interest to remark that among the young Englishmen then to be found at Delhi was Robert Napier, who, at that very time, was engaged, at the head of a body of sappers, in strengthening the fortifications which, twenty-seven years later, were so long to bid defiance to the forces which John Lawrence was to keep hurrying thither from his distant province.

CHAPTER III.

LIFE AND ADVENTURES AT PANIPUT. 1834—1837.

At the end of his four years' apprenticeship in the city of Delhi, John Lawrence was transferred to a 'district' and placed in charge of the northern division of the Delhi territory. Its chief station was Paniput, at a distance of some twenty miles from which there lay the important military cantonment of Kurnal. But the Paniput district needed no cantonment to keep alive the martial spirit, or to awake the military associations, which are inseparably connected with its history: for what the plain of Esdraelon has been to Jewish, and the carse of Stirling to Scottish, history; what Belgium has, in later times, been to the history of the whole of Europe;—that the Paniput district is to the history of the Indian peninsula. It is, in short, the battlefield of India.

Not to speak of less important combats and campaigns innumerable, three times over the fate of the whole peninsula has been decided within its boundaries. It was here, in 1556, that Akbar, the greatest of the Moguls—then a stripling of thirteen years old—after performing, according to the story, prodigies of personal valour, which we may believe or not, succeeded, as we must believe, under the guidance of the able general, Behram Khan, who nominally served under him, in winning back for his father, Humayun, the empire which he had lost. It was here, in 1739, that Nadir Shah, the greatest warrior whom modern Persia has produced, after raising himself to the Persian throne, and beating back the Turks and Russians to the west and north, and taking Herat and Candahar, Ghuzni and Cabul, to the east and south, shattered the forces of the Mogul, Mohammed Shah, and carried off the spoils of Delhi as his prize. And it was here, once more, in 1761 that Ahmed Shah, Dourani, after repeatedly invading India through the Khyber Pass, finally defeated the Mahratta hosts, and, after incredible slaughter,

drove their remnant headlong southward over the Nerbudda, deprived, for the time, of all their northern conquests. Had it not been for this crowning victory, the Mahrattas must have overrun and conquered all Upper India thirty years and more before the Wellesleys came to stop them.

Influenced, it may be, by these historical traditions, the people of the Paniput district bore a character for turbulence and disaffection beyond that of any of the adjoining districts; and if the city of Delhi had given John Lawrence an insight, which he could hardly have obtained elsewhere, into the condition of all classes of a city population, as well as of the older aristocracy, it is equally certain that few districts could have given him so thorough an acquaintance with the wants and habits of the best part of the inhabitants of India, its agricultural population, and—what is more material to note here—with, perhaps, the very best section of that best part, the widely spread race of Jats.

Let us then, as in the case of the city of Delhi itself, and for the same reasons, dwell, for a moment, on the history and leading characteristics of the race which, under various designations, occupies by far the larger part of the country in which John Lawrence's active life is henceforward to be passed. The Jats are said by Tod, the historian of Rajpootana, to be descended from the ancient Getæ, or Scythians. The apparent similarity of name, no doubt, suggested the precise Scythian tribe to which he assigns their origin; but their handsome, prominent features and their tall, bony frames clearly proclaim their northern birth. They are to be found scattered over nearly the whole of the country between the Jhelum and the Jumna, and extend southward even to Bhurtpore and Agra. Like other hordes of northern invaders, which, from the time of Darius and Xerxes downwards, have poured down into India from the wilds of Central Asia, they were, in their turn, conquered and absorbed by the compact and complex civilisation of the country which they overran, and they thus became almost as Brahminical in their belief and institutions as the Hindus themselves. Indeed, a process was then going on in India similar to that which was witnessed, on a still larger scale, in Europe in the fourth and following centuries after Christ. The successive hordes of Ostrogoths and Visigoths, of Vandals and Franks, of Bulgarians and Slavonians, who overran the decaying fabric of the Roman Empire, were themselves taken captive by the nascent Christianity and by the majestic system of law which

are its most fruitful and enduring legacies to the Western world. But the stereotyped religion of the Hindus could not satisfy the spiritual wants of the Jats, in the way in which Christianity, with its few rules and its all-embracing principles, its boundless power of development, and its adaptability to the most diverse conditions of time and place, was able to meet the needs of the progressive nations of the West. And the Jats have, to an extent which is very remarkable in an Oriental people, been able to appreciate and assimilate one elevated creed after another, as they have, successively, been presented to them.

At one time, the new impulse came in the shape of that great religious and social movement which, starting in the breast of an unlettered shepherd of Mecca, was carried by the half-naked Arabs and by those whom they conquered and inspired, amidst the crumbling of all older thrones and creeds, in one sweep of unbroken conquest from Gibraltar to Delhi. At one time, as in the case of the religion preached by the pious and gentle prophet Nanuk, it came in the shape of a peaceful internal reformation. In this way, many of the Jats, especially those along the southern Indus, became fervent Muslims, while others, several centuries later, especially those in the central districts about Lahore and Umritsur, became equally fervent Sikhs—'disciples,' that is, of Nanuk, and of the Gurus or religious leaders of whom he was the spiritual progenitor.

Strange, at first sight, that the same people should be able to embrace with equal enthusiasm creeds so different as those of Mohammed and of Nanuk! And strange, also, that the hatred between the votaries of each should be so intense that John Lawrence could afford, in the crisis of our fate, to put arms freely into the hands of one of these sections, in full confidence that they would use them, not against their common masters but against their own brethren! But it will be discovered, on a closer investigation, that the fundamental principles of both religions were the same. Both were based on an antagonism to idolatry, and both proclaimed as their leading doctrines the Unity of God and the equality of man. And it is a melancholy fact of human nature, as observable in the East as in the West, that they who differ least on religious questions generally hate the most. Whether an Eastern race, which has proved itself so singularly plastic in religious matters as to adopt successively three such religions as the Hindu, the Mohammedan, and the Sikh, will be capable of a yet further step in advance, and be

ready, when it is properly presented to them, to embrace Christianity, is a question which is equally interesting in an ethnological and religious point of view.

As far south as Kurnal, all the Jats adopted the name and creed of Sikhs; but those beyond are still Hindus in creed and retain their original name. The Sikh religion was, at first, merely a reformed Hinduism. But in process of time it became much more, and may be described rather as 'the military and political spirit superadded to a reformed religion.' The Sikhs are equally well known as excellent and thrifty cultivators of the soil and as hardy and formidable soldiers. Their feelings, social and political, are highly democratic; and though they rally round the leaders of their race, it is in the free spirit of associates rather than of servants. Those Jats who have not adopted the new religion are quite as fearless and industrious, but they are more peacefully inclined, than their Sikh brethren. They know how to defend their rights, should any one be venturesome enough to attack them, with the most effectual of arguments; and the only real obstacle to our conquests in the north of India in the beginning of this century came from them. It was the great Jat chiefship of Bhurtpore, for instance, which rolled back for a time the victorious career of Lord Lake.

Such, then, was the race—thrifty, industrious, independent, stoutly attached to their village communities and their ancestral acres—with which John Lawrence had now to deal in his new appointment as collector-magistrate of the Paniput district. How did he deal with them?

I shall presently quote the testimony, as vigorous as it is discriminating, of the only Englishman who can speak with personal knowledge of John Lawrence's work at Paniput. But, first, let us inquire in more general terms what the duties of a collector-magistrate are. Thousands of educated Englishmen who appreciate Lord Lawrence warmly, and regard him as one of those national heroes of whom England may justly be most proud, yet have a very inadequate notion of the long and painful period of self-discipline and probation which prepared the way for his success. They know little of the labours, multifarious and yet monotonous, exhausting yet also refreshing; of that union of a liberty which is practically unfettered with a responsibility the most real, which go to form the characters and shape the careers of Englishmen in India, and which have produced, in spite of many mistakes and shortcomings, a succession

of statesman-soldiers, and soldier-statesmen, such as no imperial state has before produced, and in the long roll of whom there are few names equal, and not one superior, to that of John Lawrence.

A 'district' usually contains a population of several hundred thousand inhabitants, who are spread over several thousand square miles of territory and are distributed among many hundreds of villages and townships. Over this vast area and these multitudinous interests the 'collector,' sometimes with a small staff of European assistants, sometimes, as in the case of John Lawrence at Paniput, single-handed, rules as a kind of terrestrial providence. His primary duty, as his name implies, is the collection of the revenue or land-tax, on the punctual payment of which the solvency of the Indian Government depends; while on the care with which it was originally assessed, on its moderate and fixed amount, and on the leniency with which, in times of exceptional distress, its payment is enforced, depends, in great measure, that for which alone it is to be hoped our Indian Empire exists—the prosperity and happiness of its inhabitants.

In provinces which have been long settled, the collection of the revenue is, except where the powers of nature have been more than ordinarily unkind, a work of no great difficulty. In fact, owing to the admirable village system which, in the North-West Provinces and in the Punjab, the most ardent of our reformers have happily been content to leave unreformed, it may almost be said to collect itself. Tax-gatherers in England may be surprised to hear that the taxes in these provinces often possess the peculiarity of being paid before they are asked for. But the collector of revenue is also a magistrate, and is responsible for the administration of justice throughout his district. Every criminal, from a dacoit or a thug down to the petty thief, is brought before him. He is expected to redress every grievance, from a murrain among the flocks or a scourge of locusts among the crops, down to 'a claim to a water-spout in the bazaar' or an opprobrious epithet. For many hours every day, while the rain is descending in cataclysms and turning the world into a vapour-bath, or, again, while the sun is scorching it like a furnace and baking it till it is hard as iron, he sits patiently on in his stifling cutcherry, listening, reproving, advising, consoling, condemning.

The collector has to keep his eye upon the police, well knowing that they will work effectively if that eye, or one of the thousand

Argus eyes which he requires, be upon them: without it they will do nothing, or worse than nothing. 'Everything,' says R. H. Cust, in an excellent article on the subject in the 'Calcutta Review,' 'which is done by the executive government is done by the collector in one or other of his capacities—publican, auctioneer, sheriff, road-maker, timber-dealer, recruiting-sergeant, slayer of wild beasts, bookseller, cattle-breeder, postmaster, vaccinator, discounter of bills, and registrar.' New tanks to be constructed; rivers to be bridged, to be turned into new courses or back into their old ones; new roads to be made; new dispensaries, hospitals, schools, or jails to be built; lands to be cleared or drained; primæval forests to be felled or new ones to be planted; new crops or new methods of cultivation to be introduced;—all these come within the collector's legitimate and ordinary functions. Who is sufficient, it may well be asked, for these things! No one is altogether sufficient; but it is simply surprising, thanks to the energy, the sagacity, the punctuality, the strong love of justice, and the careful and loving study of the native character which so many of our administrators in the latter days of the East India Company possessed, how few of them fell conspicuously short of such success as is attainable by poor human nature.

But the most important duties of the collector-magistrate are not discharged in the stifling cutcherry at the central station, but rather in that 'cutcherry on horseback,' or under the easily shifted tent, which forms his locomotive home during some five months in the year. Whenever the season is favourable—whenever, that is, the deluges of rain or the overpowering heat allow him to do so—he makes a progress through his dominions, which is only not a royal progress because it is something more, pitching his tent, now here, now there, as best suits the purposes of his work. The people have now no longer to go to see him; but, what is much better, he goes to see them. He rides about redressing human wrongs. Divested of all state, and often quite alone, he visits each village contained in his cure of souls, takes his seat under some immemorial tree or beside the village well, where the village elders soon cluster around him. He talks to them, listens to their stories and their grievances, discusses the weather and the crops, and settles on the spot itself—sometimes by a mere word, sometimes by a long investigation of many days together—some outstanding boundary dispute which has been the cause of heart-burnings and head-breakings for many generations. He

thus gets to know the people and to be known of them. He makes allowance for their many faults—the growth of centuries of oppression by foreign or domestic tyrants; he appreciates their simple virtues, and is rewarded in his turn—a reward not often given to an Englishman when he has risen to a higher grade—by their gratitude, their respect, and their affection. Often, indeed, when a magistrate has risen to the top of the tree, and is the victim of the scandal and the envy, the ingratitude and the self-seeking, the etiquette and the officialism which haunt the antechambers of the great, and finds that he is in that worst of solitudes, alone amidst a crowd, must he look regretfully back upon the simpler life, the purer motives, and the more satisfying rewards which were his once happy lot.

And now let us hear what Charles Raikes, the author of one of the best books on this and kindred subjects,[1] and, like Charles Trevelyan, another lifelong friend of John Lawrence, writes, from his personal recollection, about the duties which the Paniput district required, and of the way in which John Lawrence discharged them.

Early in the year 1835 John Lawrence was stationed at the ancient and historically famous town of Paniput. He was 'officiating' as magistrate and collector of the district. He had also to conduct a settlement and survey of the lands comprised in his district. Let us glance for a moment at the details of the sort of work and duty confided to this young Irishman. Paniput is situated on the high road from Delhi to the Punjab, about seventy miles north-west of Delhi. The district is inhabited by Jats, industrious Hindu peasants, devoted to agriculture, and attached by the strongest ties to the land; by Goojurs, who were given to cattle-lifting; and by Ranghurs (Rajpoots converted to a nominal form of Mohammedanism), who were as jealous of their land as the Jats, still worse thieves than the Goojurs, with a taste for promiscuous robbery and murder into the bargain. These men, it is to be remembered, are not at all like the typical 'meek Hindu,' but on the contrary are tall, strong, bold fellows, determined and ready to fight for every inch of their land and every head of their cattle. In those days they never went out to plough or to herd their buffaloes without sword, shield, and often a long matchlock over their shoulders.

Over some 400,000 of a population like this, scattered in large villages through an area of 800,000 acres, John Lawrence ruled supreme. He himself, in those days, had very much the cut of a Jat, being wiry, tall, muscular, rather dark in complexion, and without an ounce of superfluous fat or flesh. He usually wore a sort of compromise between English and

[1] *Notes on the North-West Provinces of India.*

Indian costume, had his arms ready at hand, and led a life as *primus inter pares*, rather than a foreigner or a despot, among the people. Yet a despot he was, as any man soon discovered who was bold enough or silly enough to question his legitimate authority—a despot, but full of kindly feelings, and devoted heart and soul to duty and hard work.

As magistrate, he had charge of the police—a handful of sowars, or troopers, mounted on country horses and armed with sword and pistol, and mostly retained at headquarters, and the ordinary constabulary force stationed at the various thanahs, or police-stations, dotted over the district. Each of these stations was under the charge of a thanadar, or chief of police, with a jemadar, or sergeant, a mohurrir, or scribe, and a dozen or so of police burkundazes (literally 'hurler of fire'), who, armed with sword or lance, formed the rank and file of the force. But these were supplemented by a nondescript but very useful village official, a choukedar, whose duty was that of a watchman or parish constable, and a reporter (to the thanadar) of all crimes, sudden deaths, or other noteworthy events which happened in his village. This was the framework of the district police, little changed from the system which had prevailed for centuries under the Emperors of Delhi. It was a system sufficiently efficacious to protect the public under a just and energetic magistrate, and an apt engine of oppression under a venal or, above all, under a careless and slothful official. Suffice it to say that John Lawrence at Paniput was the right man in the right place, and for the following reasons.

First, he was at all times and in all places, even in his bedroom, accessible to the people of his district. He loved his joke with the sturdy farmers, his chat with the city bankers, his argument with the native gentry, few and far between. When out with his dogs and gun he had no end of questions to ask every man he met. After a gallop across country, he would rest on a charpoy, or country bed, and hold an impromptu *levée* of all the village folk, from the headman to the barber. '*Jan Larens*,' said the people, '*sub janta*,' that is, knows everything. For this very reason, he was a powerful magistrate, and, I may here add, a brilliant and invaluable revenue officer.

Secondly, he was never above his work. I have an indistinct recollection of his arresting a murderer, on receiving intelligence of the crime, with his own hand. At all events, where the report of a murder, an affray with wounding, or a serious robbery came in, John Lawrence was at once in the saddle and off to the spot. With greater deliberation, but equal self-devotion, he proceeded to the spot to investigate important disputes about land, crops, water privileges, boundaries, and so forth. The Persian proverb, 'Disputes about land must be settled on the land'—'*Kuzea zumeen buh dir zumeen*'—was often on his tongue.

Thirdly, owing to this determination to go about for himself and to hear what everybody had to say about everything, he shook off, nay, he

utterly confounded, the tribe of flatterers, sycophants, and informers who, when they can get the opportunity, dog the steps of the Indian ruler. What chance had an informer with a man who was bent on seeing everything with his own eyes?

All this might have been said of Donald Macleod, of Robert Montgomery, and of other friends of Lawrence who became great Indian administrators. But John Lawrence had, in addition, a quality of hardness, not amounting to harshness, but not short of severity, which made the malefactor tremble at his name. He might or he might not be loved—this seemed to be his mind—but respected he would be at all events.

I have said enough to show that in the early days of his Indian career John Lawrence was a most energetic and vigorous magistrate. To do any sort of justice to the training of those days which prepared him for future distinction, I must now turn to Lawrence as a revenue officer. The good old East India Company which he served, and which called the young men sent out to rule her provinces 'writers,' called the chiefs who gathered up her lacs of rupees and ruled her landed millions 'collectors.' John Lawrence then was a 'collector,' as well as a magistrate, and just then the collector's work was in a transition state, which entailed severe labour and tested every faculty. The great survey and settlement of the land was in progress; boundaries were to be marked, every village measured and mapped, and registers of the area, the soil, the cultivators, the rent, the land-tax, in short, of all the facts and figures affecting the land, were to be made.

How it happened that Lawrence was expected, single-handed, to accomplish so vast a work I cannot tell. All that I can say is that when I was sent to help him, I cannot remember that he had any one to share his burden except his native officials, who, in those days, had purely ministerial powers in the revenue departments. For seven or eight months he lived amongst the agricultural classes in his tent, and thus mastered the detail of revenue work.

I was younger than Lawrence, and had been only three or four years in India when I went to join him at Paniput. For very good reasons I shall never forget my first interview with my chief. He was, I was going to say, in his shirt sleeves, only I am not sure that he wore a shirt in those days—I think he had a *chupkun*, or native undergarment—surrounded by what seemed to me a mob of natives, with two or three dogs at his feet, talking, writing, dictating—in short, doing *cutcherry*.

After some talk with me he summed up thus: 'Now look at this map. Paniput district is divided into nine thanahs (police circuits): I give you these three at the north-western extremity, including the large cantonment of Kurnal. I put the police and revenue work under you. Mind, you are not to get into rows with the military authorities. If you behave well to them they will be civil to you. If you can keep crime down and collect

your revenue in your share of the district, I will not interfere with you. If you want help, come to me. All reports of your own thanahs will be sent to you. I shall soon know what you are made of. Go, and do not be hard on the zemindars (landowners). Government revenue, of course, must be paid, but do not be hard: "The calf gets the milk which is left in the cow." Come and see me sometimes.'

Lawrence thus trusted me and taught me to trust myself. From that hour my fortune as a public officer was made. I learned my work under the ablest of masters, and shall ever gratefully remember the day which saw me installed as assistant to the young magistrate and collector of Paniput.

John Lawrence remained in charge of the district which has been thus vigorously described for nearly two years (1835–37), and, during the greater part of that time, he was the sole British officer in charge of the administration. The district was in bad order when he came into it, for his predecessor had not been very competent. Part of it, moreover, had suffered from the drought of 1833 and 1834. 'To bring people,' says John Lawrence, 'who were impoverished and discontented into order and contentment; to make them pay their land-tax punctually; to deter, if not to wean, them from their habits of life, which were those of their ancestors for centuries; to revise the assessment of the land-tax which had broken down, and, at the same time, to carry on and improve the general administration, was no light task.'

In his predecessor's time, the revenue had often been collected almost in the Sikh fashion, at the point of the sword. Soldiers and guns had been the ordinary accompaniments of the revenue-collector. This John Lawrence did not like, and he determined to get on without them. There was one walled village, in particular, which was notorious for its recusancy. John Lawrence surrounded it by night with his own police, and, stationing a small knot of them on each track which led to the pastures, gave them strict orders to turn back into the village all the cattle as they came out in the early morning. The police did as they were told, and the village cowherds took back word that the orders of the Sahib were that no cattle were to be allowed to go to pasture till the land-tax was paid. Another and another sortie was attempted by the cowherds, but always with the same result. Meanwhile the cattle were becoming more hungry and more obstreperous, and, at last, a deputation of the villagers came out and asked for an interview with the Sahib. It was granted; but

he soon found that they had come armed only with the usual *non possumus*; they had no money and could not pay. 'Well,' said the Sahib, 'I will let you go to the next village to borrow it, and if you bring back either the sum you owe or a bond from the banker to pay it for you within a certain day, well and good. Otherwise, the cattle stay where they are.' The deputation saw that the Sahib was in earnest, and soon returned with the money. The cattle were able, by two or three o'clock in the afternoon, to pass out to their long-delayed morning meal, and there was no more trouble in the collection of the revenue in that part of the district; no need of guns, or soldiers, or even police.

Another incident, told me by Sir Richard Pollock, is equally illustrative of the change produced in the Paniput district by the change of ruler. His predecessor, as I have said, had not been enough of a terror to evildoers; crimes had increased *pari passu* with revenue arrears, and in his strenuous endeavours to introduce a complete reformation John Lawrence's health broke down. One day, a Haileybury contemporary, who was at work in an adjoining district, rode over to see him and found him ill in bed. Nothing seemed to interest or arouse him. In the course of a talk, which was all on one side, his friend happened to mention that at a place where he had changed horses that morning he had found the stand of a fakir, and, entering into a conversation with him, had asked whether there was anything new stirring in the neighbourhood. 'Indeed there is,' replied the fakir; '—— Sahib is gone, and everybody regrets him; for one, Larens Sahib, has come in his place who is quite a different sort of man;' and he then went on to draw a dismal picture of the way in which rules were enforced, rogues punished, and revenue arrears collected. 'Such a recognition of my efforts by such a man,' said John Lawrence, in telling the story, 'acted upon me like a tonic, and I seemed to mend from that hour.'

Thus the work grew under John Lawrence's hands, and the natives knew who was king. In the evening he used to hold what he called his durbar—that is, he would sit outside his tent in the loosest of loose dresses and talk by the hour to all comers. 'You Feringhis,' said an old chief to him one night, who had seen what he thought to be better days, 'are wonderful fellows; here are two of you managing the whole country for miles round. When I was a young man we should have been going out four or five hundred horseman strong to plunder it.' So entirely was John Lawrence thrown on the natives

for society and for recreation during his Paniput life, that he seems to have half forgotten his own language. A young civilian, who called upon him one day on his way up the country, told John Thornton, on his return, that he had hardly been able to make out what Lawrence said to him, his conversation was so interspersed with Persian words and expressions.

But the natives were not his only companions. If he had a good horse or a good dog he never felt alone; and he took care, in this sense of the word, never to be alone. His means, at this time, were small, and he never spent much upon himself; but the sight of a fine Arab was, once and again, too much for him, as an incident he was fond of telling, and which has been handed on to me by Sir Richard Pollock, shows.

One day, a sheikh brought a batch of Arabs to his station, and one of the first visitors to the stables was, as a matter of course, the collector-magistrate. A particularly fine Arab, named Chanda, took his fancy; but, as the price named for it was three thousand rupees, and no efforts could induce the owner to take a smaller sum, while all that John Lawrence possessed in the world was two thousand rupees, he was obliged at last to go home disconsolate. On the way, it occurred to him to make one effort more, and when he reached his home he got out his two money-bags, each containing a thousand rupees, put one bag on each side of him in his buggy, and drove straight back to the sheikh. As he stepped down he took care to shake the bags well and make the contents jingle in the old man's ears, and explained again that he could pay down so much in cash and no more—that he had no more. The cheerful jingle of the rupees was too much for the dealer, and Lawrence went home, the happy possessor of the Arab, but without a penny in the world that he could call his own.

But Chanda was not so bad a bargain after all. On one occasion he saved his owner's life. John Lawrence was galloping home late one night, as his custom was, across country, when the Arab came to a dead stand, nearly shooting his rider over his head. Lawrence tried to spur him on, but Chanda refused to move, and only, after backing a good way, and then taking a considerable circuit, consented to continue in the former direction. The night was very dark, and Lawrence, who had never known his horse do the like before, was a good deal puzzled. The next day he managed to make his way back to the place, when he found, to his horror, that he had ridden at full

gallop right up to a large open underground tank or cistern, such as are not uncommon in that thirsty country, some thirty feet deep. One step more would have been the death of both horse and rider. And often afterwards, in looking over the points of a horse, he would draw attention to the full, round prominent eye, able to take in rays of light invisible to man, which had caught sight of the yawning chasm immediately below him in that dark night. 'It was an eye like that,' he said one day, as he was examining a fine horse's head in Mr. Woolner's studio, 'which saved my life.'

The post of collector-magistrate of Paniput, which had hitherto been only an 'acting' one, now became permanently vacant, and John Lawrence, who had not been thought too young to reduce anarchy to order on a minimum of pay, was thought, as it seems, too young, now that it had been so reduced, to keep things going and to receive the proper salary. And, to make the disappointment more complete, he was superseded by a civilian who, having failed as a judge and having been deprived of the less onerous appointment, was now given the far more difficult post of collector and magistrate of Paniput! It was red tape with a vengeance; but if it first gave John Lawrence the hatred of red tape which he certainly showed when he was in a position to burst through its bonds, it may be well for all concerned that the disappointment came upon him.

Turned out of Paniput, John Lawrence reverted to his 'substantive' post as assistant magistrate and collector of Delhi, and, many years afterwards, he thus summed up what, as he thought, he had seen and done and gained in these first five years of work in India :—

During my charge of the Paniput district, I completed my training as a civil officer. It was a hard one, it is true, but one which I had no cause ever to regret. It has facilitated all my subsequent labours, no matter how varied, how onerous. I had become well acquainted with the duties of an administrator both in a large city and in an important agricultural district. I had come in contact with all classes of the people, high and low. I had made acquaintance with most of the criminal classes, and understood their habits of life. I had seen all the different agricultural races of that part of India. I had learned to understand the peculiarities of the tenure of land, the circumstances of Indian agriculture, canal and well irrigation, as well as the habits, social customs, and leading characteristics of the people. During this period, I defined and marked off boundaries between village lands, which had been the cause of sanguinary feuds for generations; I revised the revenue assessments of the land; I superintended the collection of the revenue; I had charge of the

treasury; I sought out and brought to justice a number of great criminals; I managed the police, and, in fact, under the humble designation of magistrate and collector, was the pivot round which the whole administration of the district revolved. In the discharge of my multifarious duties I visited, in all cases of more than ordinary difficulty, the very locality itself. For the most part, my only aids in all this work were the native collectors of the different subdivisions of the country. In addition to all these duties, I did what I could to relieve the sick. In those days we had no dispensaries, and the civil duty of the medical officer was limited to the charge of the jail. I used to carry about a good-sized medicine-chest, and, when the day's work was over, was constantly surrounded by a crowd of people asking for relief for most of 'the ills to which flesh is heir.' Many a poor creature I had thus to send away, simply from fear of doing him harm.

Such was my daily life for nearly two years, and such were the lives of my brother civilians in adjacent districts. Half our time was spent in tents; and every portion of our charges would, at one time or the other, be duly visited, so that, in the event of any untoward accident, or serious crime, we could judge pretty correctly as to the peculiar circumstances connected with it. These were very happy days. Our time was fully occupied, and our work was of a nature to call forth all our energies, all our sympathies, and all our abilities. Our emoluments were relatively small, but the experience and the credit we gained stood us in good stead in after years. During this period I saw little of English society, finding that I could not enjoy it and also accomplish my work. Thus I seldom visited the cantonments except on urgent business, and then only, as a rule, for a single day. In those days I met with many curious adventures, and, on some occasions, was in considerable peril of life, but good fortune and careful management combined brought me successfully out of them all.

These last simple words are tantalising enough. They suggest but they do not satisfy. How suggestive and how unsatisfying I have the best of reasons for knowing; for old friends of John Lawrence have told me, alike in writing and in conversation, that, when he first came home from India on furlough, he used to pour forth a continuous flow of stories of hair-breadth escapes from assassination, from drowning, from wild beasts; of great criminals hunted down; of cattle-liftings on a gigantic scale; of riots and raids; of robberies and murders; of thugs and dacoits; of feats of his favourite dogs or horses,—all drawn directly from his own experience. And again, many years afterwards, when he had retired, as he thought, from public life, and when a family of children was growing up around him

at Southgate, or at Brocket Hall, it was their ordinary Sunday evening's treat to hear one of these wonder-stirring adventures. 'What shall it be?' he always used to begin by asking—'a hunt, a robbery, or a murder?' The children, with that appetite for the awe-inspiring which is one of the most pleasurable pains of childhood, and one of the most loved regrets of a later and a sadder age, generally first chose the murder. But their father had an abundant store of each kind from which to draw.

Unfortunately, it occurred to no one, either in those earlier days when few people thought that he would become great, or, in later days, when he had already become so, to write these stories down, and many of them are therefore irrecoverably lost to the world. But I am told that greybeards of the Delhi district, and of the Jullundur Doab, still talk of his deeds of prowess and skill around the village well, and tell them to their children's children. It may well therefore happen that some of these may go down to posterity, magnified and multiplied as they go, and that, centuries hence, Jan Larens may play in the North-West of India something of the part which the Trolls and Jotuns, or even Thor and Odin, have borne in the sad and serious European North; and that he may live for ever in Eastern song and fable along with the great heroes of the long past, Zal and Rustum, Solomon and the two-horned Iskander. It would be well if an immortality of the kind had always been as well deserved—acquired, that is, by deeds at which no one need blush, and for which no human being was the worse, and many were much the better.

What a diary John Lawrence's would have been, during this early period of his life, had he had the patience to keep one! But, fortunately, his adventures, even in the absence of all diaries and contemporary letters, need not be wholly lost to his countrymen. When, after the death of the Arabian prophet, disputes arose as to the meaning of a Sura, or the binding character of a Tradition, and no answer could be obtained from the shoulder-of-mutton bones, or the oyster-shells or the bits of wood, or the leaves of trees, on which the Sacred Message had been originally written, recourse was had to 'the breasts of the faithful,' and there a satisfactory answer or explanation was often found. From 'the breasts of the faithful' scattered everywhere help has been, I think I may say, as diligently sought by me as it has been freely given. From the breasts of Montgomery and Cust, of Trevelyan and Raikes, of Thornton and

Pollock, and several other of his earlier friends; from the recollections of his wife and children; from a host of his later friends in England; not least, from his devoted lady-secretary,—I have gathered up such fragments as I could of the history of his earlier and more adventurous career; and from these, as well as from my own recollections of his conversation, and from five or six stories, which, shortly after his marriage, with the aid of his ever-ready and faithful helper, he himself committed to writing, I am able to give some slight idea of the dauntless tracker of criminals, of the 'mighty hunter before the Lord,' of the giant in strength and in courage, in roughness and in kindliness, in sport and in work, which John Lawrence then was.

No Samson, no Hercules, no Milo, no Arthur, can have had more stories of personal prowess, of grim humour, of the relief of the distressed, to tell than he. Physically, he was a Hercules himself, as the noble busts of him by Mr. Woolner, and the remarkable portrait by Mr. Watts, which, it is to be hoped, will, some day, become the property of the nation, may still show to those who have never had the opportunity of seeing the man himself. Physical strength, commanding height, activity of body, elements of power as they are everywhere, are nowhere more potent than among the natives of India, whether among the enervated Bengalis, who can at least admire in others what they do not possess themselves, or among the wiry Sikhs and relentless Afghans, who can hardly fail to appreciate that of which they themselves possess so large a share. And when these physical characteristics are combined with others, moral and intellectual, which are conspicuously wanting in many Indian races—with absolute truthfulness in word and deed, with active benevolence, with a sagacity which is the result not of mere shrewdness, but of untiring honesty of purpose, with boundless devotion to duty and hard work—their possessor becomes a power indeed in the land.

On board the ship on which John Lawrence first went out to India, he used, even when weakened by sea-sickness, to astonish the passengers by the ease with which he could hold out at arm's length a cannon-ball which few of them could lift at all. Excitement sometimes lent him almost a preternatural degree of strength. One night, an Indian village was in flames; all efforts to extinguish it were useless, and an old woman, finding that neither she nor her belongings had the strength to carry out a sack of corn, almost all the

worldly goods she possessed, from her cottage, sat down upon it, determined, like the Roman senators of old, to perish with her household gods. John Lawrence, who just then appeared upon the scene, in a sudden access of strength, like the Samson that he was, caught up the sack, and, like his prototype with the gates of Gaza, carried it to a safe distance from the burning house. The old woman, finding that her sack of corn was saved, was no longer unwilling to save herself, and John Lawrence, going the next day to the spot, found that he was quite unable even to lift the sack from off the ground!

But these anecdotes indicate mere bodily strength. Here is one which implies something more.

Shortly after his appointment as Collector of Delhi, a lawless chief in an outlying and desert part of the country refused to pay his land-tax. Attended only by a single orderly—for he seldom took more—John Lawrence rode thither, a distance of some thirty miles, very early in the morning, to demand or to enforce payment. The village was walled, the gates were shut and barred, and not even his strength was able to force an entrance. What was he to do? To go back would be a confession of defeat and would encourage other neighbouring chiefs to give similar trouble. On the other hand, it was the hottest season of the year. There was no food, no shelter, no shade outside the walls except that of a single sickly babul tree. Finally, there were no troops within thirty miles. He sent a hasty note by his orderly back to Delhi asking for some guns, and then sat down under the babul tree, exactly opposite the principal gate, a single man beleaguering or threatening a fortified post! The fierce sun of India had done its worst, and was fast subsiding towards the horizon, but still no guns appeared, and still the resolute collector sat on. At last the chief of a neighbouring village approached and offered, should the Sahib so will, to help him to reduce his subjects to submission. John Lawrence, knowing that in India, as elsewhere, jealousy is a ruling motive among neighbouring potentates, accepted his offer for what it was worth. The result of a mere show of force, backed up by John Lawrence's stern resolution, was the submission of the recusant chieftain, the infliction of a fine over and above the land-tax, and the return of the collector in triumph to Delhi, after winning a bloodless victory, and without even the news, which has so often struck terror into the native breast, having reached the village, that the 'guns were coming.'

Years afterwards, when the Collector of Delhi had risen to be Chief-Commissioner of the Punjab, and had just succeeded in winning back Delhi from the mutineers, a list of rebel chiefs who had been sentenced to death was presented to him for his signature. The first name on the list attracted his attention, for it was that of the Goojur chieftain who had given him such timely aid twenty years before ; and he struck his name off the list and spared his life.

So much for the way in which John Lawrence managed the turbulent chieftains of his district. Now for a story illustrative of the manner in which he detected crime in a different stratum of native society. I have pointed out already how numerous were the criminal classes in the Delhi district, and have endeavoured to indicate the circumstances which had tended, for a century past, to attract them thither and to give immunity to their crimes. The story which I am about to relate is one of a collection of four or five which Mrs. John Lawrence took down from her husband's dictation at Delhi in the spring of 1845, with a view to the amusement of a younger generation who were just then beginning to appear. I give it in full as an illustration at once of John Lawrence's style in story-telling and of his energy and sagacity in action.

The Brothers.

I think it was in the month of June 1835, during my magistracy of the district of Paniput, in the North-West Provinces of India, when a murder occurred which interested me so much that, though many years have elapsed, I recollect the whole circumstances of the case as if they had occurred yesterday. The night being sultry, I had ordered my bed to be placed outside the bungalow, in the open air. This is a practice common in India when the nights, as at that season, are very hot and dry ; and, however dangerous it may appear to people in Europe, is there done with perfect impunity.

I had undressed in my room, and having put on my night-clothes, which, in that part of India, consist of a complete suit, covering the person from top to toe, was walking towards my bed, preceded by my old bearer, or valet, carrying the wax taper. Suddenly we were disturbed by the appearance of my khansama, Ali Khan, who, rushing forward with pallid face and faltering tongue, explained that, on his way to the town, he had just witnessed a murder close to my gate. I was inclined at first to doubt his story, but, on questioning him further, was convinced that it was too true. Ali Khan explained that, after seeing everything settled for the night, he was on his way to his house in the town when his attention was called to a scuffle between several persons a little in front of him.

Being alarmed, he squatted down and watched, when he saw three or four men knock another down and cut his throat, after which they decamped. On seeing this he had immediately run back to give the alarm. After hearing his account I exclaimed, '*Ai pajee!* (you low fellow) why did you not run and help?' Ali Khan replied, 'I was not armed, and therefore could give no assistance, and if I had cried out they would have killed me also.'

On hearing this I immediately sent him off to turn out the guard, despatched the old bearer for my pistols, and taking the taper from him, without waiting to dress, ran off towards the place the khansama had pointed out. On arriving, I found the body lying on the face, weltering in its blood, and covered with wounds. The countenance was cut and slashed in every direction, the head was nearly severed from the body; and even the hands and arms and legs were covered with wounds. As I stooped down to examine the corpse, which was still warm, a sudden gust of wind blew out my candle. Seeing therefore that nothing could be done till assistance arrived, I sat down, and after a few minutes which, in my impatience, seemed an hour, I discovered the bearer running along with my pistols. The old fellow did not seem to like the business, for after every few yards he stopped and looked back, loudly vociferating for the guard. However, on hearing me call, he became more assured, and ran up to me. In a short time a part of the guard appeared, half-armed and half-dressed, with flambeaux and torches.

By this time the moon began to rise and cast her light over the plain, which was of much assistance to us. The first thing was to examine the ground, and, the soil being light and sandy, we had no difficulty in tracking the murderers for some distance. In India the science of tracking, whether it be the marks of man or beast, is well understood, and I have known such adepts in the art as to be able to follow a track for hundreds of miles, and that too when a person unskilled in the art could discern nothing.

I was once, with a party of villagers and police, following a number of thugs who had murdered five travellers on the preceding night. The ground was hard and covered with grass, and, beyond the marks of a struggle here and there, I could discern nothing, yet the men who were with us, after minutely examining the spot, carried the traces for many miles. On the way, they told me the number of men, women, children, and ponies of which the party consisted, and, strange to say, on their apprehension, which took place the next day, the description turned out right in every particular.

However, to return to my story: we found that the murdered man was on his way from the city to my house, that he had come to a certain point alone, when he was suddenly attacked by several men. He had run some distance, when one of them headed and turned him towards the others.

Here he had fought and been killed. The distance we examined was some two or three hundred yards, and in this space we found one of his shoes, three other pairs, the scabbard of a sword, and two bludgeons covered with sword-cuts and blood.

By this time it was near twelve o'clock; the moon had risen bright and cold, and we were grouped round the body. I felt much distressed: our search had ended in nothing; we had no definite clue to the murderers; and so dreadfully was the face disfigured, that we could not discover the probable caste and profession of the man, much less who he was. I had, in my time, seen many cases of murder, but the present one seemed fairly to puzzle me. To think that a man should be murdered almost within a stone's-throw of my door and that the murderers should escape detection was more than I well could submit to.

I sat down on a stone, directing some of the sepoys to clean the dead man's face and try to make out who he might be. What increased the difficulty was that the body was nearly naked, having nothing but a 'dhoty' or linen cloth round the loins. The evening having been warm, he had evidently been walking in this state—a practice in that country very common with all classes, from the highest to the lowest. After rubbing and cleaning the face for some time, one of the guard attached to the collector's office called out, 'Why, I verily believe it is our comrade Ram Sing! I am sure I know the curl of his moustache; he was smoking with me only this evening.' After much discussion it seemed to be the opinion of the majority that it was Ram Sing, though some still doubted. So much, however, was agreed to by all, that he was missing, and that the deceased was about his size. Taking it for granted that it was Ram Sing, we began speculating who could be the murderers.

I remarked, 'Whoever they may be, it was clearly from revenge they murdered him, or they never would have mangled his body in this way.' One of the men added, 'The man who outran and turned him must be a great runner, for Ram Sing was an active fellow.' 'Yes,' says another, 'I see one of the shoes has an iron heel, and no one but a constant runner would need such a thing.' Hearing this I began to consider what class of men would come under this description, when it occurred to me that the post throughout the country was carried by footmen. Turning round, I remarked, 'The "dawk wallahs" (postmen) are great runners: had he a feud with any of them?' A sepoy instantly exclaimed, 'Ram Sing had a brother named Bulram, a postman, with whose wife, as people say, he was rather too intimate.' 'Pooh!' says another, 'that is an old business, which Bulram well knew. Besides, who would kill his brother for such a thing?' Now it is specially necessary to remark that such connections, however monstrous in our eyes, are very common among the Jats, to whom the brothers belonged. Among them it is the practice that when an elder brother dies the younger lives with the wife, even though he be

already married. Owing to this, such illicit connections as that which existed between Ram Sing and his brother's wife were neither so much thought of among themselves nor so much reprobated as might be supposed.

Though I well knew this, I was at once satisfied that we had the right clue at last; so, sending the greater part of the men back to the house, and ordering a horse to be sent after me, I determined to follow up the search. We immediately started for the town, which was about half-a-mile distant, and directed our steps to Bulram's house. Here we found the wife, who said she had not seen her husband that day, that he was probably at the post-house, and that the brother had been down that evening, had eaten his food with her, and left the house at about ten P.M., on his way to guard. She added that, while Ram Sing had been with her, another post-carrier, a friend of her husband, had come and inquired after him, but, finding he was not at home, had left immediately.

Disappointed here, we bent our steps to the post-house. On entering the courtyard we found a number of the carriers lying on the ground fast asleep, and Bulram, the person we were in search of, quietly seated in a corner smoking his hookah. I immediately went up and addressed him on some indifferent topics, but so calm and self-possessed were his replies, that I began to think I was in error, and that he could not have committed the deed. However, taking up a lamp, I looked steadily at his countenance. Though he knew my gaze was on him, he never moved a muscle, but continued smoking with apparent apathy, while his eye, which met mine, never quailed an instant.

One of the sepoys standing by me broke the silence by exclaiming, 'Bulram, don't you see it is the hazoor (his Honour), and yet you remain seated!' Bulram never moved, nor, indeed, appeared as if he heard him. I put down my hand, and, touching him on the shoulder, said, 'Stand up, Bulram, I want to look at you.' I had, till then, been stooping over him, as he was squatting in the usual native style on the ground, and it only then occurred to me that he must have some reason for remaining in that posture. Bulram immediately stood up and, as he had nothing but the usual cloth about his loins, the upper part of the body was naked. I put my hand on his heart and said, 'What is the matter that your heart beats so violently?' He replied, 'I have been bathing, and, fearing to be late at the post, ran up all the way.' With all his composure and readiness of reply, there was something about his manner which brought back all my former suspicions. I stood attentively looking at him, when, all at once, I perceived a quantity of blood on his groin, which seemed to be welling out from under his dhoty. Pointing at the blood, I said, 'Ah, Bulram, what means this?' He gazed at me for an instant, and then said, 'Don't trouble yourself, *maino usko mara* (I killed him).' Putting up my hand for every one to remain silent, I said, 'Whom did you kill?'

He replied, 'Ram Sing, my brother; I killed him.' I added, 'Why, what had he done?' He said, 'He was intimate with my wife, therefore I killed him.'

On this he was handcuffed, and, leaving the house, I mounted my horse, which had arrived in the interim, and set out towards home. On the way, I questioned him as to how it was that his accomplices had escaped, but that he had not attempted to fly. He replied, 'How could I know that you would have tracked me out in this way? They have not escaped, they are in the post-house on the high road.' Having ascertained who they were, I instantly despatched four horsemen to the place, about four miles off, to seize them. On arriving at my house, I took the necessary depositions of the parties and Bulram's confession. At two A.M. I had just retired to sleep, when I was awakened by the return of the policemen with the other murderers. Hearing, however, that they stoutly denied their guilt, and that nothing had been found on their persons to criminate them, I ordered them to be secured, and went to sleep.

In the morning the prisoners were confronted with Bulram, who steadily persisted in his story of the previous night, which the others as resolutely denied. In the meantime a party of trackers came in and reported that they had followed the traces from the place where the murder was perpetrated; that it appeared that one man had returned direct to the city, and that two, after a considerable circuit, had gone into the post-house. I then rode down to the place with some careful men, and, after a diligent and protracted search, they found buried under the earthen floor of one of the sheds the murdered man's turban, necklace, sword, a couple of bludgeons spotted with blood and covered with deep cuts, as if from a sword or other sharp instrument. On these things being produced, the prisoners, who had till then denied, acknowledged the truth of Bulram's statement.

One of them said that, being friends of Bulram's, they had gone at his request to assist him; that they had no enmity to the murdered man, but had acted merely from friendship to his brother. He added that he had gone to the wife during the day under the pretence of asking for her husband, who was standing at a little distance waiting for him, but, in reality, to see if Ram Sing were in the house; that they then went and lay in the ditch by the side of the road until Ram Sing passed, when they sprang out on him; that Ram Sing, though surprised, resisted desperately until overpowered and knocked down; and that, as he fell, he wounded his brother in the groin. It was from this wound that the blood which I saw and supposed to be from the wounded man, had flowed, and to conceal which Bulram had continued seated when I was talking to him.

During the day, the wretched woman, the cause of this horrid deed, hearing of the death of her lover, came and asked to see his body. She embraced and kissed it repeatedly, crying bitterly, and seemed to have

no thought but for his untimely death. In the course of the subsequent investigation many facts were elicited which, in a measure, seemed to palliate the crime of Bulram. It appeared that the intimacy had existed many years, during which the husband had been perfectly aware of it. In the preceding year there had been a severe famine in the land, during which the husband, who was out of employ, was, with his wife, supported by Ram Sing, who lived with them. Some time, however, previous to the murder Bulram had objected to the intercourse with his wife, on which the brother had promised never again to visit the house. The wife, on hearing this, immediately left her husband and took refuge with her father, where, in spite of the entreaties of her own family and her husband, she insisted on remaining. The husband, seeing her determination, went to his brother, told him what had taken place, and begged he would come with him and use his influence with the wife; adding, 'You can come to see us as before, are you not my brother? did you not save us from starving?' The wife, on this, returned with them, and, a few days afterwards, the catastrophe which I have related took place.

'The murderers were made over for trial to the circuit court, where Bulram, the husband, was sentenced to be hanged, and the other two to imprisonment for life. Such is my tale. It created a great sensation at the time, and Ram Sing's fate was universally regretted, whereas no one seemed to pity Bulram. The general feeling appeared to be, 'Was not Ram Sing his brother?—how could he murder him?' '

Delhi: March 4, 1845.

Nor were John Lawrence's zeal and activity confined to his own district, vast as it was. He sometimes made work or sought it for himself outside the Paniput district, and with the best results. Here is an instance. It attracted much attention at the time from the high position held by the murdered man, and from the romantic circumstances which led to the detection of the murderer. John Lawrence was fond of telling the story, and more than one version of it has, I believe, appeared in print. From the last of these, which appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine' for January 1878, and came then fresh from Lord Lawrence's lips, I gather and condense the following, adding one or two characteristic incidents which seem, in his old age, to have escaped his memory, but were certainly told by him as part of the story on other occasions.

On the morning of March 23, 1835, John Lawrence was just going to his bath at Paniput after many hours of work, when he received a brief note in Persian from one of his police, stating that news had come from Delhi that, on the preceding evening, as William Fraser, the Commissioner, was returning from a visit to a neighbouring Raja,

a native trooper had ridden up to him and, firing his carbine into his 'sacred body,' had killed him on the spot.

William Fraser was a man of great force of character and deservedly popular among all classes, though his regard for the poor had often brought him in collision with members of the aristocracy.[1] He was also a great friend of John Lawrence. Grieved at the loss of his friend, and thinking that his intimate acquaintance with every corner of Delhi might be of assistance in discovering the murderer, Lawrence instantly ordered his horse, and rode off to Delhi beneath the blazing sun, a distance of forty miles. There he learned from Thomas Metcalfe and from Simon Fraser, the two senior civil officers left in the station, that no clue to the murderer had yet been found, and that though some Goojurs—a race famed for their skill as trackers—had succeeded in following the footprints of his horse from the scene of the murder for some distance in the direction of Delhi, they had failed to trace them beyond a point where several roads met.

This did not look promising. A casual remark which had been made by one, Futteh Khan, to Metcalfe, to the effect that he should not wonder if his nephew, the Nawab of Ferozepore, knew something about the murder, was reported to Lawrence. Metcalfe had dismissed it from his mind as suggested by motives of private animosity, but John Lawrence fastened upon it like a leech, and, soon discovering that the Nawab had had a quarrel with William Fraser about some land, he forthwith proceeded, with Simon Fraser, to a house in Delhi which belonged to that chieftain.

They found no one in the courtyard, nor did any voice from within answer to their repeated calls. Simon Fraser entered the house, and, during his absence, John Lawrence, sauntering up to a spot in the yard where a fine chestnut horse was tethered, began to examine his points, and soon noticed some nail-marks on a part of the hoof where they are not usually found. It flashed across him in an instant that it had been reported that Dick Turpin had sometimes reversed the shoes of his horse's hoofs to put his pursuers off the scent, and, at that same moment, one of the Goojurs, picking up a straw, measured carefully both the hind and fore hoofs. 'Sahib,' he cried, 'there is just one straw's difference in breadth between them,

[1] For an account of William Fraser and his achievements, see the very able and interesting article on these volumes, contributed to the *Quarterly Review* for April, 1883, by Colonel Henry Yule.

the very thing that we observed in the tracks on the road; this must be the animal ridden by the murderer.'

While this was being said and done, a trooper in undress lounged up and, in reply to a question or two, told John Lawrence that he was an orderly of the Nawab of Ferozepore, and that he had been sent by his master on a special mission to the city. 'This is a nice horse,' said Lawrence. 'Yes,' replied the man, 'he is a fine horse, but he is very weak and off his feed; he has been able to do no work for a week.' The appearance of the horse, so John Lawrence thought, gave the lie to this, and, espying at a little distance its saddle and other harness lying on the ground, he went up to it and, finding that the nosebag underneath the heap was full of corn, quietly slung it over the horse's head. The 'sickly' animal began to eat greedily. Here was one link more, and, without saying anything to excite the trooper's suspicion, he induced him to accompany him to the cutcherry, where he ordered his immediate arrest.

Some fragments of note-paper, which Simon Fraser had meanwhile picked up in a bucket of water in the house, were now fitted together by the two men. The ink had been all but obliterated by the water, but some chemicals revived it, and revealed the words written in Persian, 'You know the object for which I sent you into Delhi; and I have repeatedly told you how very important it is for me that you should buy the dogs. If you have not done so, do it without delay.'

It hardly needed John Lawrence's penetration, with the threads which he already held in his hands, to discover that 'the dogs' were the Commissioner, whose life the trooper had been too long in taking, and, on his suggestion, a message was sent to the Nawab saying that his presence in Delhi was necessary, as a servant of his, Wassail Khan by name, was suspected of the murder of the Commissioner. The Nawab obeyed the summons, but, of course, he backed up the trooper in his denial, and disclaimed all knowledge of the murder.

Inquiries which were set on foot in the Nawab's territories, while he was detained at Delhi, soon showed that a second man on foot, whose name was Unyah Meo, was believed to have been present at the time of the murder. He was a freebooter, well known for his extraordinary strength and fleetness of foot. He had disappeared on that very night, and had not been seen since. Colonel Skinner, the well-known commandant of Skinner's Irregular Horse, was charged with the duty of searching for him. His whereabouts was soon discovered, communications opened with him, and promises of pardon

made if he would give himself up and turn King's evidence against the murderer. Not long afterwards a man appeared by night and said, 'I am Unyah Meo, I will go with you.'

His story was soon told, and, simple truth as it was, it reads like a story from Herodotus about the ancient Persian court, or like a tale from the 'Arabian Nights,' rather than what it really was. He had been sent, as it appeared, by the Nawab, with instructions to accompany the trooper on all occasions, and should the first shot fail to kill the Commissioner, who was not likely, with his well-known character, to die easily, he was to run in and despatch him with his sword. Wassail Khan's first shot had passed clean through the 'sacred body' of the Commissioner, so Unyah Meo's services were not required; but he hurried off at once to tell his master that the deed was done.

All that night and a good part of the next day he ran, and, towards the evening, arrived at the Nawab's fort at Ferozepore, ninety miles distant. He went straight to the door of the Nawab's room, and demanded immediate admittance, as he had news of importance to communicate. A thick curtain only shut off the presence-chamber from the ante-room, and, as the orderly entered, Unyah Meo, with the suspicion natural to one of his profession, lifted up very slightly a corner of the curtain and bent down, all eye, all ear, for what might follow. He heard the Nawab give orders that on his leaving the room he should on no account be allowed to leave the fort. Well knowing, now that the deed was done, that his death would be more serviceable to his master than his life, Unyah felt that this order was a sentence of death, and the moment he had told his story, and had been promised a large reward—for which he was to wait till the following morning—he slipped quietly down a back way, managed to leave the fort unobserved, and ran for his life to his cottage in the jungle, some seven miles away.

He was tired out by the ninety miles he had run already; but fear gave him fresh strength and speed, and he reached his home just in time for his wives—of whom he was blessed with a pair—to take him up to the flat roof of the house and conceal him under some bundles of straw. Soon the troopers, whose pursuing feet he had seemed to hear close behind him, appeared upon the scene. But the wives, Rahab-like, kept the secret well, and Unyah, after a night's rest, escaped, like the spies, to the hills, and defied every effort to find him till he gave himself up of his own accord, in the

manner I have already described, to the commander of Skinner's Horse.

Unyah's story was borne out by the accidental discovery of the carbine which had been used by Wassail Khan, under circumstances which were quite in keeping with the other marvellous features of the case. A woman was drawing water from a well close to the Cabul gate of Delhi ; the rope broke, the bucket fell into the water, and the hook used to recover it brought up, not the bucket, but the missing carbine ! Other people deposed that they had seen the trooper return on the night of the murder with his horse—the horse which could neither work nor eat !—in a tremendous lather, as though from a long or rapid ride. The Nawab and his trooper still stoutly denied all knowledge of the crime, but they were tried by a special commissioner, found guilty, and hanged together before the Cashmere gate of the city.

It is a story which John Lawrence might well be fond of telling, and it is not without a strange and tragic interest to remark that Simon Fraser, the cousin, who had helped him in the search, was the very man who twenty-two years later, when he, in his turn, was Commissioner of Delhi, was to fall one of the first victims to the fury of the mutineers, in the Mogul's palace, on May 11, 1857. It did not need a similar display of sagacity on John Lawrence's part to discover, on that occasion, who the murderers were; for the deed and its accompaniments seemed to shake our Indian Empire to its base ; but it did need all his sagacity, all his courage, and all his other manly qualities to undo what they had done ; and how he was equal to the occasion will appear in the later portion of this biography.

Here is a story of another pursuit which, though it failed in its immediate object—the arrest of the criminal—served, when put side by side with the preceding, to deepen the feelings of admiration with which the natives regarded their intrepid and dare-devil ruler.

There was a notorious robber in the district of Paniput whom John Lawrence was anxious to seize. The man had been caught once, but his wife had bribed the guard and he had escaped. He had committed several murders, and, one day, John Lawrence, receiving information that he was to sleep that night in a cottage not far distant, at once organised a party of horse and foot and, without communicating his intention to any one, started, about ten at night, for the village. It was a fine moonlight night, and a few miles' ride brought them to

a river which must needs be crossed. Lawrence had hoped to find boats on the spot, but they had been taken away to a neighbouring fair, and only one small boat was left, which, though it was large enough to carry the foot police across, would have to take many trips if it was to carry over the horsemen also.

Time pressed. 'We must swim it,' said John Lawrence. His followers demurred ; said there were quicksands, said the stream was too rapid, and they would all be swept away. 'Well, you cowards may do what you like, but I am going,' said John, and in he plunged and swam his horse out into mid stream. The russeldar, seeing this, took courage, said it was a shame to leave the Sahib to go forward alone, and crying out, 'I fear we shall both be drowned!' he too plunged in on horseback and was followed by the others. But his fears were not altogether ill-grounded. The horsemen had nearly reached the other side in safety when they came on one of the quicksands. This immediately scattered the whole body of them. Some managed to ford over, some were thrown from their horses, and all was confusion. Lawrence's horse was a powerful animal, and plunged so violently that his rider was thrown into the river, and, with great difficulty, reached the bank. There he found the horsemen all assembled, and said to them, 'You see we are all safe after all.' 'No,' was the reply, 'the russeldar is drowned.' 'What!' said Lawrence, 'the bravest of the whole lot of you! Let us go in again and see if we can save him.' But none of them would stir ; they looked on with that placid indifference with which Orientals often regard the fate of other people, and—it must be added in fairness—often also their own, and, in spite of the objurgations of the magistrate, they showed no intention of risking their own lives to save that of their comrade.

Once more John Lawrence plunged in on foot, and soon perceived the russeldar struggling at a short distance from the bank. He had got under his horse, and though he managed to keep his head above water, he was evidently fast losing his strength and senses. John swam to him and supported him by main strength till his syce brought a rope, and then they succeeded in dragging the drowning man to land. He thus saved the man's life, but got a bad kick from the plunging horse.

In much pain he pursued his way to the village, and found that, though 'the nest was still warm' and the wife and children were within, the object of his search was not at home. The fact was, that

the night was sultry and the man had gone up to the top of the house to sleep.

A few minutes later he was seen looking over the parapet, and, as quick as thought, John Lawrence was on the roof and full tilt after him. The murderer, a man of great strength and stature, as well as speed, ran along the roofs of the houses, which were all flat and joined each other. Finding that his pursuer was close behind him, and knowing the ground well, the man jumped down. Lawrence followed him, but jumped too far, and, alighting on a declivity, managed to dislocate his ankle, thus rendering further pursuit hopeless. The robber escaped for the time, but was caught not long afterwards. In any case John Lawrence lost no caste in the eyes of his followers. They only wondered the more at the uncanny, the unaccountable eccentricities of the man who could have the courage to hang a raja, and yet risk his life to save a russeldar!

I conclude this chapter with the story of one more adventure—the discovery of a robber—which is hardly less striking than those which I have already related. It is one which I have heard Lord Lawrence tell himself, as none but he could tell it. But I prefer to give it in the more strictly accurate form in which it has come into my hands, having been written down, like the story of 'The Brothers,' by Mrs. John Lawrence, at her husband's dictation, in the spring of 1845, only a few years, that is, after the events related in it happened. It contains, incidentally, some interesting personal details, and is rich in its observation of the native character.

The Widow and her Money-bags.

It was my practice in India, where every one who wishes to preserve health either walks or rides early in the morning, instead of taking a mere constitutional (as it is called), to endeavour to join that object with business, or, at any rate, with amusement. There was always some end in view—a village to visit, a new road to be made, or an old one to be repaired, the spot where a murder had been perpetrated to be examined. If I was in tents, making my annual visits in the interior of the district, which seldom occupied less than five months of the year, there was plenty to engage the attention. I seldom failed to visit every village within a circle of seven or eight miles before the camp moved on another march. Their locality, the nature of their soil, their means of irrigation —a point of much importance in the East—the general appearance of the inhabitants, and the character they bore among their neighbours, were

all points on which I was much interested; for all such information was of infinite value in the performance of my daily duties.

I had, in truth, so much to occupy me, or, what is pretty much the same thing, made so much occupation for myself, that, though often the sole European in the district, and literally without any one with whom I could exchange a word in my native tongue, I do not think that I ever felt listless for a day. I sometimes rode alone, but more frequently with a single horseman, who either carried my rifle or boar spear. Thus, if anything in the way of game turned up, I did not lose a chance; and if a messenger was required, or anything was to be done, an active fellow was always ready. More than once I have in this way brought home a buck; and many is the good run I have had with wolf, hyæna, and wild boar. It would, no doubt, have enhanced the pleasure to have had a friend with whom to contest the spear, and to talk over the turns and chances of the field when ended. Still, when I look back on those days, it is surprising how much I enjoyed them in my comparative solitude.

Nor was I thus always lonely. At times, a friend or two from the nearest station would pass a week with me, or a rendezvous on the borders of contiguous districts would be arranged among us, and then the woods would ring with whoop and cry and wild halloa. Oh, those were pleasant days! I hope some are still in store for me, for the easy, quiet, jogtrot life does not answer for one who has lived a life of action. I recommend all my friends to think twice before they leave India; at any rate, until they feel themselves growing old, or want a pair of crutches. It is but a melancholy pleasure, after all, merely looking back upon such scenes.

However, to return to my story, from which I have strangely digressed. My follower was instructed to ride at a respectful distance, so that I might freely converse with any one I might pick up by the way. One or more of the headmen, or some of the proprietors of the village I was visiting, usually mounted his mare, and rode with me to the next village; thus acting as a guide, and, at the same time, beguiling the tedium of the way, often, with useful information, at any rate, with amusing gossip.

I had, one morning, mounted my horse for such an expedition, but had not proceeded far when I met the *kotwal*, or chief police-officer of the neighbouring town, bustling along in quite unwonted haste. On seeing me, after making the usual salutations, he reported that a burglary had occurred in the town during the previous night, and that he was anxious that I should visit the spot myself, as neither he nor any of the police could make anything of the case.

I at once assented, and, as we rode along, I ascertained that the party robbed was a poor widow, who, with her niece, lived in a large and substantial but rather dilapidated house in the neighbouring town. The robbery, it seemed, had created much sensation, from the circumstance

that the widow asserted that she had lost a large sum of money, whereas she had hitherto been deemed miserably poor. 'Some of the neighbours,' remarked the policeman, 'deny that she has been robbed at all, and indeed to me it appears suspicious; I suspect there is some *fareb* (deceit) in the matter. Where could such a helpless creature get so much money? It was but the other day that she was exempted from her quota of the watch-tax, as *mooflis* (a beggar), and now she asserts that she has lost one thousand and fifty rupees.' 'Well, well,' said I, 'that will do; we will hear what she has to say for herself. Don't you pretend to make out that she was not robbed. I suppose there are marks about the house of a forcible entry.' 'Oh, yes,' he replied, 'I don't deny there is a hole in the wall by which the door has been opened. There were two marks of footsteps about the interior of the courtyard, but the ground was so hard, we could make nothing of it. I have, however, sent for the *khogea* (tracker), and, if anything is to be discovered, I am sure he is the man to do it.'

By this time we had arrived at the house, where we found some policemen, some of the neighbours, and the widow. The *khogea*, or personage celebrated far and near for his powers of recognising and tracing the marks of biped and quadruped, had already examined the premises. He informed me that the footsteps were difficult to trace, from the hardness of the soil, as well as from the passing and repassing of the people; but that he had satisfied himself that there had been two thieves, both of whom had entered the house, while only one appeared to have left it, and that he had followed the traces, through various turnings and windings, till they finally stopped at the house of a man who was said to be the nephew of the widow herself. He then showed me the different marks, from the interior of the widow's house up to the very threshold of that of the nephew. There were certainly some traces, but so very indistinct to my eye that I could form no opinion. The tracker, however, seemed perfectly convinced. 'One foot,' he observed, 'is small and delicate, which goes to the nephew's house; the other, a large broad foot, I cannot trace beyond the courtyard.' The nephew was summoned, his foot was compared with the print, the *khogea* insisted that it exactly corresponded, and it certainly answered to the description he had previously given.

We then entered the house and carefully examined the premises. The thieves, it seemed, had picked a small hole in the side of the wall, so as to admit a man's hand, and had thus opened the outer door. It was clear that the theft was perpetrated by some one who was well acquainted with the premises, for the money had been concealed in three earthen pots, buried in the ground floor within a small recess. The ground had been dug up in the exact spot where the pots lay, and it must have been the work of only a few minutes, for they were close to

the surface. It seemed that there was some suspicion of the nephew in the mind of both the old woman and her neighbours, for he was a man of reckless and dissolute habits. 'But, widow,' I said, 'did he know of your treasures?—did he know of the place where you concealed them?' 'No,' she replied to my query, 'I can't say he did. I never let him come into the house for many years, though he has sometimes come as near as the door, and asked me to make friends; but I was afraid of him, and never let him pass my threshold.' 'Well,' I remarked, 'it seems a bad business. That you have been robbed is evident, but there seems no clue as to who did it; and, as to your loss, you must have told a lie, for I hear it was only a few months ago that, under the plea of destitution, you were exempted from the watch-tax.' 'My lord,' replied the widow, 'it is very true that I pleaded poverty, and poor enough I am; nevertheless I have been robbed of a thousand and fifty rupees. You may believe me or not, as you please; my history is this. Some forty years ago, or more, my husband was a merchant, well-to-do in this town; but after a time his affairs fell into disorder, and when he died his creditors seized everything but this house in payment for his debts. When dying, he told me that certain moneys had long been due to him in the holy city of Muttra. Accordingly I went there, and collected something more than two thousand rupees, with which I returned here, and I have lived ever since on this sum.' 'What,' I interrupted, 'have you lived on this money for forty years and yet have a thousand and fifty rupees, nearly half, left?' 'Yes,' said she, 'I opened my treasure once a month, and took out two rupees, which lasted me and my niece for the month.' 'Why,' I remarked, 'at this rate, you had enough for the next forty years; why could you not pay the tax?—how much was it?' 'Two pyce a month,' she replied, 'and all widows are exempt.' 'Yes,' remarked a bystander, 'if they are poor; but you are as rich as Lakhsmi (the Hindu goddess of fortune). I believe that Kali has sent this misfortune on you for your lying; do you recollect when you were assessed at one anna, how you wept and tore your hair, and said you were starving? You are a sad liar, by your own account, and are well served. I hope, if you ever recover your money, the Sahib will make you pay it up with arrears.' 'Oh,' said the widow, clasping her hands, 'restore me my money, and I will pay for the rest of my life.'

As I suspected, from the different circumstances which had transpired, that the nephew was in some way connected with the robbery, I directed his house to be searched, but nothing which could in any way implicate him was found. Despairing, then, of discovering the criminal, I mounted my horse, and after telling the police to be on the look-out, I set off towards my tents. I had ridden some little way, conning the matter over in my mind, when it struck me how very singular it was, that the *khogea* should persist in it that only one of the thieves had left the house. As

the walls were very high, and as there was but the one door to the courtyard, it seemed as if the thief must still be inside. 'Pooh, pooh!' I cried, 'the thing is out of the question; did we not search the house? And, after all, what could a thief be doing there? The *khogea* is trying to mystify me.' However, I was not satisfied: after riding a little further, I turned round and galloped back. I said to the police, who had not yet left, 'We must have another search,' and, upon this, my myrmidons spread themselves over the premises. While they were searching I began to pace up and down, with some little impatience, I confess, as the thought struck me of the bootless errand on which I had returned.

Suddenly I heard a policeman exclaim, 'I have not seen *him*, but I have seen his eye,' and, as he spoke, he pointed to one side of the courtyard near where he stood. On examining the spot we discovered what appeared to be a small air-hole to some vaults, and from this the man persisted he had seen an eye glisten. Turning to the widow, I demanded what places there were underground, when she explained that there were subterraneous vaults which had never been open since her husband's death, and which she had not thought of mentioning when we first searched the house. 'A second case of Guy Fawkes,' thought I. 'Show me the entrance. I dare say some one is down there; though why anyone should be such a fool as to hide there passes my understanding.' The old dame accordingly showed me a small door in a retired part of the courtyard, which had hitherto escaped observation. By it we descended to some very extensive vaults, and, after some search, dragged out a man. He had not the money about his person, but after some little hesitation showed us where it was concealed, at the foot of one of the pillars. He confessed that he belonged to a village in the vicinity, and that he had been induced by the nephew to join him in robbing the old lady, whose treasures he had for a long time suspected. It seemed that the thief had slept, part of the night, in the nephew's house, and that they had been prevented from effecting the robbery till late in the night from the numbers of the people who were about, and, consequently, the morning had broken before they had time to divide the booty, or dispose of it in any safe place. In the hurry and confusion it had seemed best that he should hide in the vaults, where it was supposed that no one would think of looking; for the nephew was afraid to conceal him in his own house, or to allow him to pass out of the town with such a large sum in silver, lest, being recognised by some of the guards at the postern as a stranger, he should be stopped and searched. When the nephew was confronted with his accomplice, his effrontery forsook him, and he confessed that he had seen the old woman smoothing the earth in the recess one day as he stood at the threshold; and, from this circumstance, coupled with her always being in that part of the house, he had suspected that she had property concealed.

When the coin was produced, the woman recognised her money-bags; and on opening and counting the money, we found the exact sum she had stated, namely, one thousand and fifty rupees, or about one hundred and five pounds in English money; so that this poor creature had lived on about four shillings a month, and even supported, part of that time, a little niece! While the money was being counted and her receipt written out, I said, 'You had much better give this money to a banker, who will allow you seven or eight per cent. for it, and in whose hands it will be perfectly safe; otherwise, now that folks know you are so rich, being a lonely helpless old woman, you will certainly have your throat cut.' 'No, no!' cried the old harridan, as she grasped her bags in an agony lest I should take them from her, 'no, no! I will bury it where no one will ever know.' I accordingly allowed her to go off with her treasures; and out she tottered, bending under the weight of her money-bags.

I may have failed in giving an interest to this story, but it certainly made a considerable impression on my mind at the time. The avarice and parsimony of the old woman who, bending under the weight of old age, and possessed of wealth which she could never hope to enjoy, yet grudged the payment of two pyce a month to defend her from spoliation, if not from being murdered; the villany of the nephew, with his utter want of common sense and prudence in concealing his accomplice in the very premises which they had just robbed; the acuteness and discernment of the tracker, in so ably, I may say, deciphering the history of the transaction from the very faint footmarks,—altogether formed a picture which it was not uninteresting to contemplate. Of the subsequent fate of the widow I do not recollect anything, as I shortly afterwards left that part of the country; but if she escaped being robbed, she concealed her treasures in some out-of-the-way place, which, when she dies, her heirs will fail to discover. In this way, no doubt, large sums are annually lost, for although property is remarkably safe in this country, and a very large rate of interest always to be got, the people are very much addicted to concealing coin and jewels, probably from habits they acquired in former times, when seldom a year passed that a village or even town was not laid under contribution, or stormed and plundered by the Mahratta and Pindari hordes.

Delhi: April 14, 1845.

CHAPTER IV.

LIFE AND ADVENTURES AT GORGAON AND ETAWA. 1837-1840.

THE disappointment which befell John Lawrence when in 1837 he was compelled to leave the Paniput district, the field of his hard work and his success, and to fall back on his subordinate position at Delhi, is one to which any civilian in India who takes an 'acting' appointment, as it is called, is liable. So few people are able to descend with anything like a good grace to lower work when they have already proved themselves capable, and more than capable, of higher, that it is not to be wondered at that there is a general feeling in India against taking such temporary appointments. This, however, was not John Lawrence's feeling; for, when, in 1842, he was returning to India after his first furlough, the bit of practical advice which most impressed itself on the mind of a young civilian who was then going out for the first time, and with whom he had much talk, was to the following effect:—

> Never let an acting appointment, if it should be offered to you, slip by. People will tell you that such appointments are to be avoided, and are more plague than profit. It is true that you may occasionally be disappointed, and you will certainly not gain continuous promotion in that line, but you will get what is more valuable, experience, and great variety of it; and this will fit you for whatever may come afterwards. I have never let an 'acting' appointment go by, and I am now very glad that I have not.

The young civilian to whom John Lawrence gave this parting advice between Malta and Alexandria was W. S. Seton-Karr, who, though he was not destined to see much of his adviser for many years to come, was, in his subordinate position under Lord Dalhousie, to hear not a little of his fame, and to read not a few of his masterly minutes, and was, many years later, when John Lawrence had risen to be Governor-General, to be his Foreign Secretary; after that, was

to be one of the most constant and welcome visitors at his house at Queen's Gate, ending only with the Sunday before his death; and then, at the great meeting of the Mansion House, called to raise a national monument to the hero who was gone, was to deliver one of the most eloquent and appreciative of a series of admirable speeches, which, in themselves, form the most splendid of tributes to Lord Lawrence's memory. Since then, once more—as it seems specially suitable that I should acknowledge here—he has given a still more signal proof of his attachment to his former chief; for, by a careful perusal of the whole of the revised manuscripts of these volumes, he has enabled me to correct many inaccuracies as well as given me the benefit of many sound criticisms and useful suggestions.

The sting of the descent to lower work did not last long; for, after three months spent in his old appointment at Delhi, John Lawrence was promoted to the grade of 'joint magistrate and deputy-collector of the southern division of the Delhi territory,' while he was also to be the 'acting' magistrate and collector of the city itself. After discharging this latter office, which his previous acquaintance with all classes in Delhi must have made comparatively easy, for six months, he went off, in July 1836, to his 'substantive' appointment in the southern division. The work, the country, the people of the southern division, differed in many respects from the northern, and so tended to give him that variety of experience on which he placed so much value. Extending, as it did, over an area of about 2,000 square miles, and containing a population of 700,000 souls, of whom, probably, one half were Hindus, the other half Mohammedans, it included representatives of all the races with whom he had become acquainted in Paniput.

But, besides these, there were many others, such as the Meenas and Mehwatties, of whom he had no previous knowledge. These people were great robbers, perhaps the greatest in Northern India. In former times, they had been organised plunderers, roaming about the country almost in small armies, and harrying the villages with fire and sword up to the very walls of Delhi. Even now, though restrained from open violence and proving under a strong government almost a docile people, they were very thievish in their propensities, and gave abundant proof that they only wanted opportunity to fall back on their old habits. Like the Ranghurs of the northern district, they were all Mohammedans who had been converted from Hinduism as late as the time of Aurungzebe, and, of

course, retained many of their Hindu customs and traditions. Many a conversation did John Lawrence have with them on those good old times. They talked as freely with him as he with them, and frankly avowed that they looked back regretfully on the palmy days when, to use the words of their favourite adage, 'the buffalo belonged to him who held the bludgeon'—*Jiskee lattee oosee ka bhains.*

The district was particularly well adapted for the indulgence of their predatory propensities. It was irregularly shaped, was bordered on two sides by independent chieftainships, and was intersected by many low ranges of hills and by the deep beds of hill-torrents which ran dry in all seasons except during the rains, and, like the wadies of the Arabian or Syrian deserts, served as the resort of banditti, who sallied out thence on any travellers who ventured to pass without sufficient escort. 'Many a strange story,' says John Lawrence, 'did the people of the country tell of the doings of their ancestors in this way.'

The difficulties of ruling such a people were not lessened by the calamitous drought which in 1837–38 had fallen on many parts of Upper India and, following so soon after that of 1833–34, had caused great suffering, even when it did not reach the dread extremity of actual starvation. The chief force of the visitation fell on the native states of Rajpootana, Bhurtpore, and Bundelkhund; but the Agra division of the North-West Provinces, including the districts of Agra, Etawa, and Mynpoorie, also suffered much, and there was terrible loss of life. In John Lawrence's own district, though the distress was great, no lives were lost. The soil, unlike the clay of many parts of Northern India, which bakes as hard as iron, is of a light porous character, and does not need much rain. Moreover, the district was well supplied with wells and jheels which could be used for the purpose of irrigation. Thus it happened that, owing to the constant care and energy of John Lawrence and his colleague, the well-known Martin Gubbins, notwithstanding the general distress and the predatory and warlike character of the people; notwithstanding also the fact that not one single soldier was stationed in the district; yet crime and violence were kept within moderate limits. If they did not actually decrease, they did not increase; and there are times and occasions when, to be able to say with truth that crimes of violence have not increased, is tantamount to saying that extraordinary exertions have been crowned by the success which they deserve.

And here I may insert a story which gives a forcible picture of one of the difficulties with which a magistrate had in those days to deal almost singlehanded—a difficulty, moreover, which, as recent events in Mooltan and elsewhere have shown, has not, even now, wholly disappeared. I give it with some considerable abridgment, but, as far as possible, in John Lawrence's own words, for they show the man throughout, and exhibit in strong relief his courage, his vigour, and his readiness of resource.

Passive Resistance.

In the spring of 1838, when the famine which had for some time afflicted the north-western provinces of India was still raging, it happened that I was encamped not far from the town of Rewari. The pergunnah (or barony) was just surveyed, and I had come down to that part of the country to settle the land revenue for a term of thirty years. While I was there, a feud arose between the Mussulman and Hindu inhabitants of the town, which, but for the interference of the authorities on the spot, would, most unquestionably, have ended in bloodshed, if not in a partial insurrection. The point in dispute arose from a well-known prejudice of the Hindus against the slaughter of the ox, which they hold to be a sacred animal. The Mussulmans, on the other hand, wished to eat beef, as it was cheaper than either mutton or goat; and though they formed only a small minority of the population, they seemed determined now at length to get their way. Year after year they had begged for permission to kill the forbidden animal within the walls, or even at any reasonable distance outside. But it had all been in vain, for the Hindus vowed that they would have recourse to force if their religious scruples were disregarded, and so the Mussulmans remained dissatisfied and oppressed.

At last, the leading members of the Mussulman population brought me, one day, when I was in camp, a fresh entreaty worded in somewhat the following manner: 'Hail, cherisher of the poor! Be it known unto your enlightened excellency, that for many years the Hindus of this town have, by their lying and deceitful representations to the highest authorities, prevented the Mussulmans from killing cattle, under the plea that those animals are sacred. Our lords, the English, have hitherto made it their rule to prevent one class of their subjects from tyrannising over another, and have dealt out impartial justice to all, making no distinction between caste, creed, colour, or race. Indeed, such is the protection which all enjoy, that it may be said that the wolf and the lamb drink from the same ghaut. What, then, have we oppressed creatures done, that we are denied the benefits which all others enjoy? Trusting that you will take our grievous case into speedy consideration, and issue an order enabling us to eat beef, we pray that on you the sun of prosperity may ever shine

gloriously.' Such was the petition which, on that day, was read out in open court before several hundreds of Hindus and Mussulmans. Everyone around could see and hear all that was going on, as the canvas walls of the tent were taken down on three sides.

While the petition was being read, the audience preserved a respectful silence; the Mussulmans stood anxiously expecting my decision, and I observed the Hindus furtively glancing at my countenance to read, if possible, therein, the order about to be issued. I may here remark that no people in the world are more observant of character, or more quick or able judges of it, than those of Hindustan. They seem, by a kind of intuition, to understand every movement and every gesture. Nor is this surprising. Subject for so many centuries to rulers whose will is law, the ability to comprehend the character and anticipate the thoughts of their masters has become a necessary part of their education.

I felt that both law and equity were on the side of the Mussulmans, but seeing how strong was the feeling of opposition among the Hindus, and what an infringement of a long-standing custom it would be, I advised them to make a formal application to the Commissioner, as superintendent of police, who forthwith sent an order permitting the slaughter of cattle. I fixed upon a spot for this operation about three-quarters of a mile from the town, hoping thus to soften the blow to the Hindus. But their rage and indignation knew no bounds, and I was continually beset wherever I moved with petitioners. Finding me inexorable they returned to their homes, to deliberate with their friends. They waited in ominous peace until the festival of the Mohurram, six weeks later, came round, then suddenly rose, and attacked the Mussulman procession with all manner of weapons, bricks, stones, and even dead pigs and dogs, animals to which 'the faithful' have the greatest abhorrence.

The confusion and tumult which ensued were tremendous, and a desperate affray and loss of life would have been the result, had not the tahsildar, a native of much force of character and self-won influence in the place, hastily summoned the police to the spot, and put himself, though a Hindu and a Brahmin, at the head of the Mussulman procession, and conducted it in safety through the town. The parties separated, mutually breathing vengeance against each other; the Muslims swearing by their fathers' graves that they would wash out the insult in the blood of every Hindu in the town, even if they died, to a man, the martyr's death.

The tahsildar was thankful for his success so far, but felt that the presence of the magistrate alone could arrest further mischief, and accordingly sent special messengers for me to the place where business had called me. I was in camp, forty miles off, in a straight line, but with a range of steep and pathless hills between, necessitating a circuitous

route some twenty miles longer; so the information did not reach me till about noon the following day. Here was a pleasant communication for me; the hot wind was blowing a perfect simoon, and it required no small spirit of adventure at such a season to face the heat and sand over that wild country. Something, however, was to be done, and that quickly; so, after taking ten minutes to consider, I summoned some of the neighbouring villagers, and asked if they knew the direct paths over the hills, and whether they would engage to conduct me across. They replied that they knew the way well enough, but that it was quite impracticable for any but men on foot, or for goats. 'Never mind,' I replied, 'I can go and you can show me the way.' When a Sahib says he will do a thing, a native is too polite to oppose it, and acquiesces. The servants were at once sent forward with some clothes to push on as best they could; the others with the camp and baggage were to follow later; while a guide started at once to wait at the base of the hill till the heat of the day had sufficiently subsided for me to venture across the plain.

At three P.M. I mounted my best Arab, and, with one mounted orderly, started for the hill, at the foot of which I found the guide waiting. We dismounted, and led our horses up the steep ascent. Before we had gone far the orderly's horse fell. We left him to his fate, as there was no time for delay. The path now became more and more precipitous. In places it seemed all but impassable; and, had there been room to turn my horse, I felt almost inclined to give it up and go back. Yet we pushed on and on till we reached the top. If it was a labour for my poor horse to scramble up, the difficulty and danger of descending the other side was much greater; any slip would hurl him headlong down; but by dint of care, what with sliding and slipping on his haunches, we, at last, reached the bottom without serious damage. It was six o'clock by the time the descent was accomplished, so that there was little more than an hour of daylight remaining, with more than thirty miles of sandy trackless plain, intersected by ravines, to traverse, and nothing but a western star and information from an occasional village to guide me. But, trusting to the speed and endurance of my gallant steed, well tried in many a hard day's run before, I dismissed the guide and set off at a hand gallop.

Towards ten o'clock at night I discerned the thousand little twinkling lamps which light an Indian city, and, riding into the town, found the people all on the alert, and was soon recognised, my horse and myself being well known there. 'Larens sahib is come,' was repeated from mouth to mouth, with much surprise, as they knew I was at Rewari the day before. My sudden appearance scared them, and they slunk away to their houses. After parading the streets for a short time till they were quiet, I went to the tahsildar and heard from him of the commotion having increased throughout that day. I sent messengers to collect all

the police from the neighbourhood, and then repaired to the somewhat rough quarters of a hostelry (serai) just outside the walls. Here I luckily found an officer belonging to the political department, Captain R——, who, being in ill health, was glad to recruit in rather more comfort than in tents ; for I had repaired and slightly furnished two or three rooms in the serai, in case of an emergency like the present. After seeing my horse well rubbed down and fed I retired to rest. In the morning, I stationed police at the gates, at the market-place, and at other central spots, that they might be ready in case the Hindus should have recourse to arms, and there they remained for three weeks.

Thus the danger passed by, for the Mussulmans with their more active, warlike habits, backed by the European forces, were too strong for their opponents. So, after receiving a decided rebuff to a fresh petition from me, the Hindus tried a wholly new method. By a preconcerted and simultaneous movement they shut up all the shops, suspended trade and business of every description, and declared that, until the obnoxious order was rescinded, they would neither buy nor sell, nor indeed hold any communication with the opposite party.

This plan of passive resistance was by far the most effectual they could have adopted. It completely paralysed their enemies, and alarmed the magistrate more than he would have liked to own ; for they had complete control of the supplies, being the wholesale as well as retail dealers of the town. The next morning, when not only the Mussulmans, but the lower orders of Hindus came, as usual, to purchase the day's provisions, they found all the shops closed Living from hand to mouth as they do, they were in blank despair, and, adjourning to my house, they implored my leave to break open the granaries and help themselves, if I could not compel the traders to open their shops. I replied that the traders had done nothing contrary to law, and that I had no power to compel them in any way. I felt also that it would lead to general anarchy and plunder if I did not restrain them from attacking the granaries. Yet food they must have, and that at once.

A plan occurred to me which would give me time to reason with the Hindus, and, possibly, bring them to a better state of mind. I collected many waggon-loads of grain from the country round, at my own risk, trusting that the Government would refund me when the peril was made known to them. This grain I stored, and gave out by letters of credit to retail dealers, whom I chose myself and placed in the streets. In this way all the slight wants of an Asiatic were supplied, and so careful was the organisation of the whole thing, that there was no ultimate loss to the Government. Meanwhile, I published proclamations warning the Hindus against blind allegiance to their priests, and telling them that any act of violence would meet with prompt retribution. This I was frequently able to do in isolated cases, as combination was now impossible

for them. They first sent petitions to the Commissioner, and then to the seat of Government itself in the hills, complaining both of me, their magistrate, and the tahsildar. These were in due time returned to me for explanation. I did not think it necessary to answer their charges against myself, but successfully vindicated the tahsildar.

For twenty-two days the Hindu traders held out, till I was much worn and harassed with the constant work of inspection, repression, and writing answers to complaints. At last, the poorer Hindus found that they were injuring themselves as well as the Mussulmans; gradually a shop was opened here and there, and on the evening of the twenty-second day, a crowd of Hindus came to me in a humble frame of mind, owning that they had been led away by their priests, begging for pardon, solemnly promising never to repeat the offence, and offering to open their shops at once. I agreed to this, and thus a combination which had threatened to produce a general uproar was quietly and peaceably put down. I was able to satisfy the inquiries of Government as to my somewhat independent action in the matter, and so to establish the conduct of the tahsildar that he received special thanks for all he had done. He did not, however, long survive to enjoy his recovered credit. A few months afterwards he died from a sudden attack of cholera.

From the southern division of the Delhi district, which had been spared, as I have already shown; the full fury of the famine which had visited the North-West, John Lawrence was called off to a district in which it had done its worst. He was specially selected, in November 1838, for the post of 'settlement officer' at Etawa by Robert Mertins Bird, a man whose name is little known to Englishmen generally, and who, it is to be feared, is, at this distance of time, little remembered even among the 23,000,000 inhabitants of the North-West Provinces whom he did so much to save from misery and ruin. But his services are not to be measured by the little noise they made in the world, or by the little or no reward which they received. After serving, for twenty years of his life, as a judge, he suddenly joined the Revenue Department, a department which has proved to so many the study and despair of a lifetime. He was soon recognised as the chief living authority on the subject, and he managed, during the next thirteen years, to plan and to carry through a measure which was as complicated and difficult as it was vast and complete, the survey and settlement of the whole of the North-West Provinces. On returning to England, after thirty-three years' service, amidst the warm appreciation of all who knew what he had done, and how he had done it, he lived quite unnoticed, and passed to his grave without a single external mark of distinction.

Such is the lot—the lot borne uncomplainingly and even gratefully—of many of our best Indian administrators. One here, and one there, rise to fame and honour, but the rest live a life of unceasing toil, wield a power which, within its sphere, is such as few European sovereigns wield, and with an absolute devotion to the good of their subjects such as few European sovereigns show. They have to be separated from their children during the most impressible period of their life, and the wife is often obliged to prefer the claims of the children to those of her husband. India can thus be no longer, in any true sense of the word, a home to them, and when at length they return to England, they do so, too often, broken in health, find themselves unnoticed and unknown, strangers even to their own children, and settle down from a position of semi-regal influence into, say, a semi-detached villa, visited by few save some half-dozen old civilians like themselves, who have borne with them the burden and heat of the Indian sun, and now drop in, from time to time, to talk over old days and interests which are all in all to them, but of which the outside world knows nothing at all. Verily they have their reward ; but it is a reward such as few outsiders can understand or appreciate.

To have been selected by Robert Bird as a helper in the great work in which he was engaged was looked upon, ever afterwards, as a feather in the cap even of those who, from luck or otherwise, were destined soon to eclipse the fame of their old patron. John Lawrence, afterwards a first-rate revenue authority himself, was reluctant to leave his harder and therefore, as he deemed it, pleasanter work at Gurgaon, but he felt that a call by Robert Bird was a call to be obeyed. He learned in his school, fully sympathised with his noble motives, and, to a great extent, adopted his views. It is doubly incumbent, therefore, on the biographer of John Lawrence to pay a warm, if only a humble and a passing tribute, to a man to whom he owed so much and of whom his countrymen know so little.

Sir John Kaye tells a story of a Frenchman, Victor Jacquemont, who, after the manner of the more frivolous part of his nation, asked Holt Mackenzie, one of the highest revenue authorities in India, to explain to him in a five minutes' conversation the various systems of land revenue obtaining in different parts of the country ! The experienced civilian replied that he had been, for twenty years, endeavouring to understand the subject, and had not mastered it yet. A warning taken to heart by Sir John Kaye may well serve to order any

ordinary Englishman clean off the ground on which, with heedless steps, he may have been preparing to venture. But my object is a simpler and humbler one. It is not to explain the inexplicable, or express the inexpressible, but, merely, to show what was the general nature of the evils from which Bird and his associates were endeavouring to save the country, and to indicate in very general terms the character of that 'settlement' of the North-West Provinces by Bird, which, afterwards, had so material an influence on the settlement of the Punjab by the Lawrences.

When, in the earlier part of the nineteenth century the conquests of Sir Arthur Wellesley and Lord Lake had laid so large a part of Northern India at our feet, the first question that pressed for decision, was the method in which the cost of its administration could best be met. The theory in all Eastern states is that a certain proportion—very variable in amount—of the produce of the land belongs of right to the Government; and, in India, the theory is supplemented by the clear understanding that if the owner pays that proportion to the Government he cannot be disturbed in possession. But with whom was the agreement for the payment of the state dues to be made? In other words, who were the rightful owners? In Bengal, at all events, we had set ourselves an example for all future time of how not to do it. For, under the auspices of Lord Cornwallis, a 'permanent settlement' of the land revenue had been made, very possibly with the best motives, but with the worst results—at the cost that is of 'permanent' injury alike to the Government and to the best portion of its subjects. It had been made without sufficient inquiry as to who the true proprietors were, or what the future capabilities of the soil might be. It seemed more natural, and was certainly more easy, for Government to make an agreement with the one big man who made himself out to be the richest and most influential inhabitant, than with a large number of smaller men; with one zemindar, as he was called in Bengal, rather than with a hundred ryots or their representatives. And, as the result of the 'permanent settlement,' these zemindars woke up one morning and found themselves transformed by us into landowners—superseding, that is, the true hereditary proprietors, and reducing them to the rank of tenants-at-will, or little better, and often at exorbitant rents. These very zemindars, however, were, owing to the introduction of the 'law of sale,' liable, in their turn, to be evicted by other capitalists or speculators less scrupulous even than themselves.

These were mistakes, which it might have been supposed that, taught by experience, we could easily avoid, in the revenue arrangements for the North-West. We only succeeded, however, in very partially avoiding them. We had become conscious of our ignorance of the conditions under which alone a permanent settlement might advantageously be thought of, and so had taken the initial step towards knowledge. Settlements were accordingly now made, not in perpetuity, but only for a short term of years, and not till after some inquiry had been made as to who the true owners were. But, unfortunately, the men we pitched upon as the proper landowners turned out again, in many cases, to be nothing of the kind. The 'sale law,' as though it had not done injustice enough in Bengal, was transported into the North-West, and the assessments made were extortionately high, often amounting to a half of the gross produce. In vain did the proprietors rush to the local courts for protection. Protection the judges of the local courts could not give, bound down as they were by strict legal rules and ignorant of the history and peculiarities of the people. What scanty means of subsistence remained to the true proprietor, the meshes of the law carried off. Confusion became worse confounded. Estates were often put up for sale in the ignorance of the owner, and bought at merely nominal prices by intriguing native officers. And then, when the mischief had been half done, we tried to undo it. Rhadamanthus-like, though with anything but rhadamanthine motives, we punished first, and discovered what the offence was, or was not, afterwards.

In 1822, Holt Mackenzie introduced what has been justly called the 'Magna Charta of the village communities in India,' all the more justly, perhaps, that, like Magna Charta, its provisions were not at once carried out into practice, and that, like Magna Charta also, it needed to be renewed and developed in later times. From various causes, which need not be mentioned here, the revision of the settlement, as arranged by him, made little progress for some ten years, but at last, in 1833, under the Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck, the man for the work was found in Robert Bird. He threw inexhaustible energy and fire into a task for which he had been long prepared, alike by an extensive knowledge of the inhabitants of the North-West Provinces, and by a special, though quite unofficial, study of the subject. He avoided most of the mistakes which had crippled the execution of his predecessor's project, and suggested a simple method for determining, cheaply and at once, the interminable

disputes as to ownership and boundaries by the summoning of a village jury on the spot, under the supervision of the Commissioners. Allowed to choose his own men, he selected the very best for the purpose that could be found in the whole of India, whether from the civil service or the army. Witness it the names of Thomason, Reade, and Mansel, of Edmonstone and of James Abbott, of Henry and of John Lawrence. In a few years, every village over an area of 72,000 square miles was measured, every field mapped, the nature of the soil recorded, and the assessment fixed at a moderate rate for a period of some twenty years.[1] Such was the great work in which John Lawrence was now called to bear a part.

It is not to be supposed that a work so gigantic could be carried through without many mistakes and without involving, in special cases, considerable injustice. A change of government always implies injustice. In Eastern countries it has too often implied a total overthrow of all existing rights. And, apart from this, Eastern notions are in many ways so essentially different from Western, that what is the highest right in our eyes may well seem the highest wrong in theirs. Now the governing principle of the new settlement was, that the true proprietors were the village cultivators, and that any middle-men who came between them and the Government, as contractors for the revenue, were interlopers, drones who consumed the honey in a hive which was not too well stocked with it. No one will deny that there was much truth in this; few, on the other hand, will now be found to say—not even the most thorough-going of the settlement officers of that time who still survive—that it was the whole truth. The hereditary revenue contractors—talukdars as they were called in the North-West, zemindars as they were called in Bengal—were not necessarily proprietors as well. They might, or might not, be owners, in part or the whole, of the district for which they contracted. But, though the two things were quite independent of each other, it is important to note here that each involved in the Eastern mind notions of property.

Property in land is, all the world over, the most cherished and the most sacred kind of property, but it is not the only kind. To disturb an arrangement affecting property which has gone on for many years, perhaps for generations, is a very strong step, as all history—the history of the Agrarian Laws and the reforms of the

[1] See the whole subject discussed in Raike's *North-West Provinces of India*, chap. ii., and Kaye's *Sepoy War*, vol. i. chap. iv.

Gracchi at Rome above all—bears witness. At Rome the 'public land' was undoubtedly in law and in fact the property of the state, which might, at any rate, resume, for purposes of its own, what, for purposes of its own, it had granted out. The word used in Roman law for the enjoyment of the 'public land' by a private individual (*possessio*) was a word which carefully excluded the notion of ownership and conveyed only that of occupation. Still, the state had so long forborne to exercise its right of resumption that the idea of property had stealthily crept in. These lands had passed by will from one generation to another; they had been bought and sold; they had been fenced and drained; farm-buildings had been erected upon them; their enjoyment was consecrated by most of the ties and obligations which bind the proprietor to his landed property. To disturb, as the Gracchi proposed to do, an arrangement which appeared so stable and so immemorial was, disguise it as we may, a revolution. Righteous and imperatively necessary it might be, but it was a revolution still.

In the North-West Provinces it was certainly high time to make a settlement of some kind, for anything would be better than the uncertainty and the want of method which had prevailed for upwards of a quarter of a century. Now, in every elaborate scheme there must be some one or more governing principles, and, on the whole, the governing principle selected by Robert Bird was as near the truth as any general principle could be, and, whatever its shortcomings, was more likely to secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number than any other. But it is said[1] to have been carried out by some of the officers concerned too sweepingly and with too little consideration. They looked upon every talukdar as if he had necessarily gained his position by force or fraud. In their opinion, therefore, he was lucky enough if he got any money compensation for his loss of territorial influence; he deserved rather to be made to disgorge what he and his family had been wrongfully devouring during a long course of years.

It can be easily understood how good men might take opposite views on such a subject as this, and, in the settlement of the North-West, both sides had able representatives, though the reforming party were in the majority. On the side of the talukdars was Robertson, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West, Robert C. Hamilton,

[1] *E.g.* by Kaye, vol. i. p. 160. Sir John Lawrence, in many letters which I find among his papers, is disposed to deny the accuracy of this assertion.

Commissioner of Agra, and, in a subordinate capacity, Henry Lawrence, a host in himself, who had lately obtained an appointment in the survey, on the recommendation of his brother George. On the side of the village communities was the still higher authority of the Revenue Board, with Robert Bird at its head, Thomason the future Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West, and most of the rank and file of the settlement officers, reinforced now by another Lawrence, who was also a host in himself—John Lawrence. And, as in the case of the more famous Board which administered the Punjab later on, it may be hoped that where both sides were so ably represented something like an equilibrium was established, and that the injustice which would have been done by either party, if it had had its own way entirely, was reduced to a minimum by the keen criticism which each proposition received from those who opposed it.

The district of Etawa, which fell to John Lawrence's charge, lay on the left bank of the Jumna and adjoined Agra and Mynpoorie. It was in no way a delectable place, as the following description will show. 'In no part of India,' says a well-known Anglo-Indian Book of Reference, 'do hot winds blow with greater fury. They commence in March and rage throughout the whole of April and of May. The wind usually rises about eight A.M. and subsides at sunset; though it sometimes blows at night as well. Every article of furniture is burning to the touch; the hardest wood, if not well covered with damp blankets, will split with a report like that of a pistol; and linen taken from a press is as if just removed from the kitchen fire. But, terrible as are the days, the nights are infinitely worse; each apartment becomes heated to excess, and can only be compared to an oven. The hot winds are succeeded by the monsoon, or periodical rains, the transition being marked by a furious tornado. At midday, darkness as of night sets in, caused by the dense clouds of dust; and so loud is the roar of the storm, that incessant peals of thunder are heard only at rare intervals, whilst the flashes of forked lightning seldom pierce the gloom. At last, the rain descends in torrents, floods the country, and refreshes, for a while, the animal and vegetable world.'

Etawa had suffered dreadfully from the drought, and was still feeling its effects when, in November 1838, John Lawrence arrived as its 'settlement officer.' The land revenue had, of course, completely broken down, and the land tenures were in great disorder. Here John Lawrence saw for the first time, with his own eyes, the

horrors of an Indian famine ; here, by daily contact with the starving people, he learned to sympathise with their sufferings in their full intensity ; and here, once more, he gathered together and treasured up for future use those maxims which he was afterwards to apply in so careful and yet so magnificent a manner, in his administration of the Punjab—the duty of a rigid economy in all the departments of government which admit of it, in order that the expenditure may be all the more lavish on the best and the only means of avoiding such terrible calamities for the future—the construction of tanks and canals, of roads and bridges.

The population of India, it must always be remembered, are almost entirely agricultural ; their wealth consists of their labour and their flocks alone, and in a year of famine the value of these falls at once to zero. From a commercial people a famine cuts off only one out of many sources of subsistence ; from an agricultural it cuts off all at once. At such times the prices of food for cattle range even higher than those of food for man. In this particular year, while corn rose to about ten, hay and other food for cattle rose to not less than sixteen times their usual value. A good cow could be bought for a rupee. Artificial irrigation, in the extent to which it has now been carried in India, ensures, even in the worst seasons, a considerable supply of grain ; whereas the grass lands, which receive no help either from earth or heaven, are utterly scorched up. Indeed, it is not the least tragical part of the prolonged tragedy of an Indian famine, that there are often considerable stores of food within reach of the starving people which they have no means of procuring. They see, but they may not taste thereof. Like Tantalus, they starve in the midst of plenty.

'It is owing to the agricultural character of the population and the difficult means of communication,' says John Lawrence, as he looked back in 1845 from his post of Magistrate and Collector of Delhi on what he had witnessed at Gurgaon and Etawa seven years before, 'that India suffers so dreadfully from famine, and not, as has been so unreasonably supposed, from the exactions of the English Government. The demands of Government, if not particularly moderate in themselves, seem moderate when compared with those of the native governments, and with the little that, under those governments, the people get in return. Give India good roads and canals, increase in every way the facilities of communication, and encourage the employment of capital on its resources, and then more will be done to

obviate the recurrence of famines than in any other way that can be devised.' So much has been done since 1845 in the direction here pointed out that John Lawrence's words read now like truisms. But they were not truisms then.

Thousands of natives in these two disastrous years (1838–39) left their homes in the North-West Provinces and wandered from place to place in the vain hope of getting food. Many lay down and died by the roadside, and it was no uncommon thing for John Lawrence, as he went for his morning ride, to see the bodies of those who had perished in the preceding night half-eaten by wolves or jackals which, lured by the scent of human carrion, went prowling about the country in packs, and held a ghastly revelry over the gaunt victims of the famine. It was a remark often made in his hearing, that the taste for human flesh acquired by these usually skulking and cowardly animals gave them, for years to come, courage to invade the haunts of men, and invested them, for the nonce, with the awe-inspiring attributes of man-eating or child-eating tigers.

Here is one incident of this time of trouble. It is commonplace enough in some of its details, and such as might be matched by the experience of any English officer whose melancholy fate it has been to watch over a famine-stricken district and to witness the tide of human misery which he is powerless to stop, and can only hope, to some very slight extent, to alleviate. It gives, however, such an insight into the daily life and kindly feelings of John Lawrence at this period, and brings before us so vividly so many characteristics of the people of India, that it seems to me to be well worth preserving. I have again condensed the story as much as possible, but, wherever it was practicable, have kept near to John Lawrence's own words.

The people of India are essentially a people given to pilgrimages. Jumnotri and Gangotri, situated in the Himalayas, at the sources respectively of the Jumna and the Ganges; Allahabad, where they unite; Benares, further down the sacred stream; Juggernauth in Cuttack, on the shores of the Bay of Bengal;—all these sacred spots attract to themselves thousands, or even hundreds of thousands, of devout pilgrims year by year; and, as in other parts of the world, so in India, these religious resorts become also marts of commerce. The Hindu pilgrim often returns from Benares or Allahabad just as the Haji of Central Asia or Africa often returns from Mecca—rich, not in the odour of sanctity alone. The sacred shrine presents, at certain seasons of the year, the appearance of a huge fair. Booths

are erected on an extensive scale, and merchandise from all the neighbouring countries is exposed for sale. Hurdwar, on the banks of the Ganges, not very far from the spot where it bursts out from the hills into the vast plain, is at once a great resort of pilgrims and the best horse-mart in Upper India. Here John Lawrence, with his passionate love of the animal, doubtless made not a few purchases of his favourite Arab or Kabuli horses.

But, besides these great resorts of pilgrims known to all the world, there are many other shrines of much less but still of considerable local celebrity. Such a one there happened to be not half-a-mile from John Lawrence's house ; and as the great road from the South-West, which led by the shrine, passed close under his windows, he had no difficulty in observing the manners and customs of the pilgrims. And a very rich study of Indian nature—nay, of human nature at large—did they give him. The shrine was that of 'Situla,' or Small-pox—that is to say, of the goddess who presides over and controls the disease whose ravages are more fatal than those of any other in India. It has been calculated that in Delhi, the most populous city in North-Western India, two-thirds of all the children under two years of age who die of disease die of small-pox. What wonder, then, that so terrible a goddess should be resorted to by parents from far and near who were anxious to save their children from so loathsome a death ?

Intimately acquainted though John Lawrence was with the natives, and living, as he had done for some time, within twenty miles of the place, he was wholly ignorant even of the existence of this shrine till he came to live close beside it. 'So true is it,' he remarks, 'that what is intensely interesting to the people themselves is often utterly unknown to the Europeans who live among them.' As each mother presented her child she offered also a male lamb, which she entreated the goddess to accept as a substitute for the more precious victim. And, at the same time, to propitiate the attendant priests, and, through them, the deity, she presented such other offerings, in money or in kind, as she was able to afford. These offerings were, however, devoted to the adornment neither of the shrine nor of the goddess. Far from it. There she stood in the middle of her temple, the same misshapen log of wood on which, in all its hideous deformity, the Brahmins had, from time immemorial, been accustomed to pour oil and paint ; and before her the people bowed and prayed in their thousands. Nothing could shake their

implicit faith in the power of Situla. If a child who had been presented by its parents subsequently took the small-pox and recovered, or if it escaped the disease altogether, here was an incontestable proof of her goddess-ship : she had heard their prayer and had saved them from their distress. If, on the contrary, the child sank under the malady, it would only be still more incumbent on the parents to revisit the shrine with their next infant and propitiate the goddess with even larger offerings. A picture pathetic enough this !—the earnest faith, the willing offering, the answer given or denied, and, in either case, the deepened faith, the redoubled fervour, the more abundant offerings. Pathetic enough ; but it is not confined to India, it is wide spread as human nature.

On great occasions, the concourse of people was so large that it was found necessary to increase the police force, to patrol the country, and to make arrangements for the protection of pilgrims, as well against the plunderers as against themselves. In order to secure the proper performance of these duties, John Lawrence often rode down to the shrine in person, and watched everything that went on there, and we can fancy the grim humour with which, amongst these crowded pilgrims, he played something of the part of the Turkish soldiers at the Holy Sepulchre, when, at the annual descent of the sacred fire, they endeavour, by the free use of their whips, to keep the peace between half-a-dozen sects of Christians.

Seated on his horse, he watched the women, as, one by one, they anxiously approached the goddess, with a child in one arm, and the scape-goat, as it might be called, in the other. Never accustomed to conceal his thoughts, he would sometimes indulge in a quiet and kindly banter. 'How is your demon to-day? Is she propitious? How many children has she murdered this week?'—these were questions he often put, not to the devout worshippers, but to the fat and sleek and burly Brahmins who were in attendance. These old fellows never showed any annoyance, for they were much too prosperous in their trade to feel angry at his jokes. But had he himself, at any time, fallen a victim to the malady, he would, doubtless, have been held up by them as an awful example of the Sahib who had scoffed at the goddess and had felt her power.

The loss of life and property in these pilgrimages was very great. The people generally travelled on foot, not so much from poverty as because the pains and fatigues and dangers of such a mode of travelling were considered to be meritorious and likely to propitiate

the deity. The rate of travelling was necessarily slow. There were, then, in India no public conveyances of any kind, no inns, hardly even any decent roads. There were, in fact, no conveniences for travelling beyond, here and there, the bare walls of some serai, set up, in times long gone by, by some Mussulman ruler, with its open courtyard, guarded by a gate which was always shut and barred at night, and its collection of cells, each furnished with a 'charpoi,' or frame of a bedstead, some six feet long and two broad, without mattress, pillow, or any other furniture. This accommodation, such as it was, could generally be procured for the moderate sum of two pyce. Every one carried with him his own mat, and his own brass vessels for drinking and washing; and it may well be understood, how, under such circumstances, a journey of a few hundred miles might be the business of several months.

Nor were these discomforts the worst evils that beset the poor pilgrim. Every one used to travel armed, prepared to resist attacks on life and property, though it seldom happened, when the time came, that they had the pluck to do so. Sometimes a whole party of petty merchants, or some other peaceful caste, would allow themselves to be stopped and plundered by a few resolute men without making even a show of resistance. Their credulity and blind confidence passed belief. They allowed almost any one to join their party, if he professed to belong to their caste; and thus they fell an easy prey to thugs, dacoits, and vagabonds of every description. With a little address and civility these rascals contrived to insinuate themselves into the confidence of the travellers, learned all their secrets, the place whither they were going, and the wealth of each member of the party, and then they selected their victims with discretion.

The approaches to all the more famous places of pilgrimage used to be infested by characters of this description, and hundreds of pilgrims were robbed or murdered, and often left no sign behind them. Poor travellers, unable to bear the expense of applying to the police, found it better to put up with their losses and struggle on towards the goal which they had in view, subsisting by the help of their fellow-pilgrims, or begging at the villages near the high roads. 'All classes,' remarks John Lawrence, 'are charitable, and particularly the poorer ones. Charity is universally inculcated by both the Mussulman and the Hindu religions, and the kindly and amiable feelings of the people cheerfully respond to the beggar's petition.'

One touching case of the kind John Lawrence met with in his

wanderings over his district in the person of a pilgrim who was on his way to pay his respects to the goddess Situla. He had sent forward his tents to a fine copse of ber trees, where there was a splendid tank which, even in that year of drought, was filled with water. The Hindus were bathing there, and John Lawrence, in rambling through the adjoining plantation, came upon a lump which seemed to be a dead body, but which, on looking at it more closely, shoewd some signs of life. It was the body of an old man of venerable appearance, full seventy years of age, in a most emaciated state, covered with filth and dirt, and with scarcely a rag to cover him. He had neither bag nor wallet nor property of any description, and he seemed to be in the last stage of disease. John Lawrence endeavoured in vain to rouse his attention : his mind was wandering, he could not speak distinctly, and his glazed eye indicated the near approach of death, unless immediate steps were taken to stave it off. John hurried off to his tent for assistance ; but his servants hesitated to touch a body—though they saw by his sacred thread that it was that of a Brahmin—so begrimed with filth and in so hopeless a condition. At last he prevailed on them to help him in conveying the sufferer to his tent, and there he tended him with his own hands, placed him on a bed, and gave him food. In the course of the day the pilgrim so far rallied as to be able to tell his story, and a very touching one it was.

It appeared that he had left his home in the south of India, some thirteen months before, with his wife and child, to visit the shrine of the dread goddess, of whose very existence, as I have said, John Lawrence had remained in ignorance, till he found himself her next neighbour.

On the way they all fell ill, and the boy, the prime object of the toilsome pilgrimage, died before he had obtained the protection of the goddess. The mother struggled on for a little while, and then she too died. The father, left quite alone in the north of India, where he knew no one and no one knew him, determined to press on to Lahore, which lay far beyond what was then the British frontier—for there a brother of his had settled some twenty years previously. He had already travelled some 900 miles on foot in the manner I have described, and Lahore was still several hundred miles distant. Wearied and travel-worn he continued his journey, and had actually arrived within two stages of that city when he was attacked by robbers, plundered of his little remaining property, and wounded. Here his courage seemed to have forsaken him; he could struggle on no further; he did not attempt to accomplish the object for

which he had toiled so far, but directly he was able to move, turned his face homewards without seeing his brother. Being a pilgrim and, still more, a Brahmin, he fared pretty well at first; for he was helped by the hospitality and alms of the villagers on the way. At last he recrossed the Sutlej, and was, once again, in the British provinces. Here he found the famine raging, and now his troubles thickened. He had managed to reach the place where I found him, about one-third of his way home, when he was attacked with dysentery. He told me he had remained under the ber tree for fifteen days, too weak to crawl any further, and that none of the people would take him into their houses; but that now and then some women passing to and fro from the village would bring him a little food, and fill his 'lotah' with water. During one of his fits of insensibility his few remaining things had been carried off, and, for the last two days, he had eaten nothing, and, feeling himself dying, had resigned himself to his fate, when it pleased 'Narayan' to send me there. 'Now,' added the old man, 'that I have eaten, I feel strong. I shall live to return home and be able to accomplish the marriage of my two daughters; and this good deed of yours, Sahib, may yet be the cause of my house flourishing. I may yet have a grandson to perform the last rites for me.'

The old man at length seemed exhausted; he laid his head down and fell asleep. In half-an-hour my servant came in and said, 'The old Brahmin is dead.' I went and looked at his body: he appeared to have died in his sleep, probably from mere exhaustion, at the very moment when he had gone to sleep with the happy consciousness that his troubles were at an end.

John Lawrence's work at Etawa was as I have said, of a much less absorbing kind than any which he had hitherto undertaken, and he disliked it proportionately. Before he could begin his proper duties it was necessary that the whole country should be surveyed in a scientific manner, and the boundaries of all the villages determined. While this was being done by native officers, John Lawrence managed to find some employment for himself in giving temporary relief, in superintending the detailed field measurements on which the revised settlements were to be founded, and in hearing all disputes connected with proprietary and tenant-rights or with village boundaries. Work of this kind was not new to him, for, in the transitional state in which the Delhi district then was, he had managed to combine, both at Paniput and Gurgaon, much of the work of a settlement officer with that of a collector. I was fortunate enough in the case of Paniput to be able to quote the testimony of the one man who could speak from direct personal experience of John Lawrence's work there.

So now, in the case of Etawa, I am able to give a few particulars of his work and doings which have been communicated to me by the only Englishman who had any opportunity of observing them.

I am afraid (writes Mr. J. Cumine of Rattray, Aberdeenshire) that I am the only person now living who can tell you anything of Lawrence during the year 1838–39, in which he and I lived in the closest intimacy at Etawa, he being the settlement officer, while I was the magistrate and collector. It was then a newly formed district, and houses being very scarce, the one occupied by me was the only one available for Lawrence to live in. We, of course, shared it together. He did not like the appointment, as he had been far more actively employed before in various parts of the Delhi territory; but being specially selected by Robert Bird, who had a very high opinion of him, he accepted it. The initial business of a settlement imposes little work upon the officer in charge, and Lawrence fretted under the want of it.

I may here remark that, in a letter which has come into my hands, written by Lawrence to this same friend from Lahore in 1846, after describing the various places in which he had taken temporary work since his return to India from furlough, he thus refers to his life at Etawa: 'I took particular care to avoid that hole Etawa, where you and I were so nearly buried seven years ago.' A commonplace expression enough, but I quote it for two reasons: first, because, in a correspondence of many thousand letters which I have read carefully, this is the one occasion on which John Lawrence speaks of his post of duty by a name which is the very first to rise to the lips of too many public officers when they happen to be posted to a place which does not quite take their fancy; and, secondly, because the feelings of dislike with which he undoubtedly regarded Etawa, and which betrayed him, in this one instance, into the use of the word in question, were aroused, not because it brought him too much discomfort, or difficulty, or work, but because it brought him too little.

'He joined (Mr. Cumine went on to say) most heartily and happily in all the few recreations which, in the intervals of work, were available in such a dull place, and which, now, seem somewhat boyish. In the morning there was pigeon-shooting on the shady side of the house'—an amusement in which it may safely be said he would not have joined had it involved any of its more odious and more modern associations of cruelty and gambling, and worse—'in the afternoon there would be games of quoits, or swimming in a large bath accompanied by some rough horse-play. Lawrence was an excellent shot, but the game was of

a much tamer kind than the nobler animals in the pursuit of which he afterwards so much distinguished himself in the Jullundur Doab. It consisted only of quails, hares, and grey and black partridges. He was as pleasant a companion and friend as I ever met with. We were nearly of the same age, and, as we were both keenly interested in everything relating to our work, we were never separated except when we were at our respective offices. Our very charpoys at night were under the same punkah. I observed the clear decided way in which he formed a judgment upon all subjects, and the energy with which he set about his work. His resemblance to Cromwell in these and other respects struck me so much that I called him Oliver, thus jocularly expressing my sense of his vigour and determination.'

The many points of resemblance between John Lawrence and one of the greatest and most downright and God-fearing of Englishmen did not strike this early friend alone. They have struck portrait-painters and sculptors and friends without number, and, now that he has been taken from us full of years and honours, they have been pointed out in scores of newspaper articles and periodicals and sermons; but it is not without interest to note how early in life the parallel first suggested itself, and to name the friend whom, as it seems, it was the first to strike.

Like Cromwell, John Lawrence was rough and downright in all he said and did. Like Cromwell, he cared naught for appearances, spoke his mind freely, swept all cobwebs out of his path, worked like a horse himself, and insisted on hard work in others. The natives, if they did not love him, regarded him with veneration and with trust, at all events, as somebody to be obeyed. They respect a man who will be down upon them in a moment for anything that is wrong, provided only that he is scrupulously just, and this John Lawrence always was. His voice was loud, his presence commanding; his grey eye, deep-set and kindly as it was, glared terribly when it was aroused by anything mean or cowardly or wrong. His temper —the Lawrences were all naturally quick-tempered—was generally well under control; but when he felt, like Jonah, 'that he did well to be angry,' there was no mistake at all about it. 'What do you think of John Lawrence up at Etawa?' asked his old schoolfellow, Robert Montgomery—who was then magistrate at Cawnpore and had not seen him much since he came to India—of one of the native settlement officers whom John had sent thither; 'what do you think of John Lawrence? Does he work well and keep you at

it?' 'Doesn't he!' replied the awe-stricken native; 'when he is in anger his voice is like a tiger's roar, and the pens tremble in the hands of the writers all round the room.' [1]

During his year's residence at Etawa, Lawrence paid frequent visits to the house of his immediate superior—Robert North Collie Hamilton, the commissioner of Agra. Hamilton belonged to the school in revenue matters which held doctrines the opposite to those which were just then in vogue. He thought that the talukdars and chieftains, especially the Raja of Mynpoorie and Etawa itself, were being hardly dealt with, for they were to lose, henceforward, all power in their talukdaries, and to be restricted to a percentage or fixed sum in cash (malikana). He pointed out that such a policy tended to deprive the Government of the support of those natives who could have done most to help them in their measures for education, for police, and for public works, and that the power of these natural rulers would slip into the hands of far less scrupulous persons—the village bankers and money-lenders. But these differences of opinion in no way affected the friendship of the two men; and Hamilton, as we shall hereafter see, went out of his way to give John Lawrence an excellent start again after his return from furlough—a service which John Lawrence ever afterwards remembered and gratefully acknowledged.

One of the most important duties which fell to his lot as settlement officer at Etawa was the demarcation of the village boundaries when there was a dispute respecting them which the native agents were unable to decide. The work was by no means new to him; for, from his early days at Paniput, he had set himself to study the native society of India in all its aspects, and, in particular, that most characteristic and essential element of all—the village community. It was to conversations with Lord Lawrence upon this subject that, some forty years later, Sir Henry Maine, in his preface to his well-known work on 'Village Communities in the East and West,' tells us that he owed much of the knowledge of the phenomena of Indian society which enabled him to write it; and, as he truly observes, it was the patient study of the ideas and usages of the natives of India during his early career which so eminently fitted Lord Lawrence for the supreme rule of the country.

[1] Jub ghoose men t'he, goya sherbubber kee awauz! tub-to mootussuddeeon kee haut'h men kullumon t'hurt'hurate t'he!

The story of one case of a disputed boundary decided by John Lawrence while he was at Etawa is, in my judgment, well worth preserving, both for the sake of the light that it throws upon a state of things which, under our rule, seems likely soon to be a thing of the past, and because it brings into conspicuous relief the patience, the sagacity, and the resolution of the chief actor in it.

The Disputed Boundary.

Among the many fruitful sources of crime in India, few are more baneful in their results than the disputes which, until a recent period, commonly prevailed throughout the country regarding village boundaries. Feuds originating in such disputes were handed down from father to son, embittered by constant acts of mutual violence. The most desperate affrays occurred, which were seldom quelled before numbers on either side were killed and wounded; and even when temporarily adjusted, unless settled by general consent, they too often broke out again with increased animosity. In quarters where strong feeling for their clan prevailed, the feud would spread throughout all the villages in the vicinity, whose inhabitants then ranged themselves on either side as their prejudices, arising from caste or religion, dictated.

Among all castes their love for the soil, and veneration for everything connected with the village, is remarkable. These local attachments seem, indeed, to me to supply the place of love of country. It may be said that a native of India does not feel that he has a country. He cares naught for what is passing in the world or who is his ruler. His love, his hatred, his fears, his hopes, are confined to the village circle. He knows little and cares less for what goes on beyond it. So many different dynasties have governed his country; it has so often been transferred from one ruler to another, that, so long as no one interferes with village matters, he is indifferent. On the other hand, let any attack be made upon the village, let a claim be preferred to a single acre of the most barren and unproductive of its lands, and every one is up in arms, ready to risk his life or spend his fortune in preserving those possessions inviolate.

The following remarks, though more or less applicable to different parts of British India, more particularly refer to the North-West Provinces, and especially to that portion which lies along the right bank of the river Jumna. Here the people are independent and warlike. The village institutions, having never been meddled with, are more complete than in most parts of our possessions. The soil is fertile, having facilities for irrigation both from the river and from canals. It is subdivided among a great number of proprietors, who cultivate their lands with their own hands. The majority in every village are either actually related, or

are, at any rate, of the same caste. Situated in the vicinity of the Sikh and Rajpoot states, with whose people they are, even now, at constant feud, and previous to our rule were at open warfare, circumstances have fostered the bonds of clan and kindred to a very remarkable extent.

In this country, then, there are extensive tracts of land reserved for grazing. In them large herds of cattle are kept by all classes. The cultivated lands lie round or near the village and are divided among and owned by individuals. That reserved for pasturage is more usually held in common and, extending to the village boundaries, lies unenclosed, and it is here that affrays most frequently occur.

The village cowherds collect the cattle every morning after milking-time and lead them out to graze, bringing them back at night to their respective owners. In that pastoral country, villagers often own many thousand head of cattle. Where the cattle are numerous and the area enclosed, the cowherds are tempted to encroach on the possessions of neighbouring villages, particularly when the inhabitants are less numerous and powerful than their own. The boundaries were often ill-defined, and affrays were consequently very frequent. Perhaps one party, after repeatedly warning off the intruders, attempt to seize their cattle. Instantly the shrill cry of the cowherds convey the alarm, and the whole community pour forth like bees from a hive. Men, women, and even children, rush to the rescue, armed with swords, spears, bludgeons—in short, with the first weapon that comes to hand. Their opponents are supported by their own friends, and a desperate conflict ensues. The value of the land in question is of little consequence. It may be and often is, valueless. This is not the question. It is a point of honour, and every man is ready to lay down his life rather than give up a single foot of the hereditary soil.

No cases are more intricate or difficult to decide than these. The magistrate is completely bewildered; the witnesses on either side are ready to swear anything which may be required for their own parties. I have known more than one instance where, what with those who have been killed or wounded, those who have run away to escape justice, as being active parties in the fight, and those who have been sentenced to imprisonment, a village community has been completely broken up for the sake of a piece of land worth perhaps a few shillings.

The Government, fully aware, for many years, how much these evils affected the peace and prosperity of the country, were most anxious to have the village boundaries carefully defined. A scientific survey has been in progress for many years in the upper provinces, and is now (1840) nearly concluded. The boundaries were all determined and marked off previous to the survey, and thus nearly a complete stop was put to all affrays arising from this cause. It is true that, now and then, these old

disputes break out, but this is not often the case, and when it does happen, a local officer can easily, with the assistance of the village map, adjust them peaceably.

The survey, I may here observe, has been of infinite value, as enabling the Government to apportion fairly the land revenue; but if it had done nothing more than necessitate the settlement of the village boundaries, it would have conferred an inestimable benefit on the people. During several years I was employed in apportioning the land revenues of different districts, and, among other duties, had to superintend the settlement and demarcation of the village boundaries. Respectable native officers were employed; they went from village to village, collected the headmen, and, if there was no dispute, marked off and defined the boundary in the presence of all parties, causing charcoal to be buried or landmarks erected. When there was any dispute, the officer endeavoured to settle it, and, if he was unable to do so, he reported it to his superior and went on to the next village. Another class, a superior grade, then took up the unadjusted cases, of which, after much trouble and delay, they were able to decide, perhaps, nine-tenths. The remainder lay over for the European officer, who visited the spot himself, and then obliged the people to settle it by arbitration of some kind or other.

In this way, thousands of boundaries were fixed and decided in a very short space of time. In most cases, when the officer is on the spot, the matter is tolerably easily decided; but I have known instances when he has been detained days, and even weeks, about a single boundary. In such cases he pitches his camp near the village, carries on his other duties, and remains as patiently as he can till the matter is settled. The tricks, the schemes, the deceit, the lies, to which each party has recourse in order to deceive, or to evade a decision when likely to go against themselves, though to him a source of infinite annoyance, would be amusing to a looker on. It is vain for him to endeavour to settle the question himself, for he knows nothing of its merits, and, as to taking evidence in the matter, it would be useless. He might fill volumes with depositions, and, in the end, be a great deal more in the dark than when he began.

I don't know that I can do better than relate one of the many hundred cases of the kind in I have been personally engaged. It was a dispute which, as far as I can recollect at this distant period, had remained pending for some twenty years. Though several of the district officers had, at different times, visited the spot and endeavoured to adjust the quarrel, it had baffled and wearied them out.

In this case the right to several hundred acres of very fine land in the vicinity of the river was disputed, so that the property as well as the honour of both parties was involved. The rival villages were inhabited by people of the same caste, who were very powerful in that part of the country, and thus the matter excited general interest. What made the

dispute more difficult to adjust was that the one village belonged to the British Government, the other to a neighbouring chief; so that the dispute involved the settlement of the 'district' as well as the village boundary.

The lands in both villages were held under a 'coparcenary' tenure—that is, by a brotherhood descended from a common ancestor. There were probably not less than five hundred proprietors, holding, among them, some eight or ten thousand acres in either village, all of which they occupied themselves; the cultivated land being subdivided and owned, while the jungle was held in common. The village which could muster most fighting men was naturally least inclined to a legal adjustment of the question. They had appropriated the whole of the disputed area, and were powerful enough to retain possession. Any decision, therefore, they considered, could do them but little good and might injure them materially.

I had determined, however, that the question should now be set at rest for ever. So, writing to the chief to depute one of his confidential officers to meet me on the border, I set off for the spot, and pitched my camp in the neighbourhood.

The chief gladly acceded to my proposition, and I was waited on by a venerable greybeard of some seventy years of age, who, after presenting his credentials, said that his party was in attendance, and was both ready and anxious for the adjustment of the dispute. This appeared pleasant enough. I immediately put a stop to all other matters, and, collecting the leaders of the two villages, they squatted themselves on the ground in a large circle around us. I quickly, however, saw, from the spirit displayed by both sides, that there was little prospect of the case being speedily settled. Accordingly, I left them for a few days to discuss matters among themselves, but strictly enforced their attendance from morning until evening. When I thought they must be both well tired of each other, I would, now and then, look in to see how matters were advancing. At the end of the third day, I found that things were literally *in statu quo*. They had talked till they were tired, and, now, as they sat on their haunches, they were smoking away in perfect resignation and contentment.

It is usual in these cases for a jury of twelve persons to be appointed, six of either party. But each village proposed to nominate such inveterate partisans, that it became clearly hopeless to get a unanimous decision. In fact, there would have been much difficulty in finding any impartial person in the neighbourhood who possessed local knowledge sufficiently accurate to enable him to decide the boundary. Every one seemed to be enlisted on one side or the other. At last, when things seemed well-nigh desperate, I proposed to both parties that they should put the matter into the hands of one person, whose decision should be

final ; that our village should select a man of theirs, or that their village should select a man of ours. This was agreed to, and, so far, the question was narrowed. The discussion then arose, from which village the umpire should be chosen. It had at first struck me that the anxiety would be to have the selection of the umpire. On the contrary, however, either party wished their opponents to choose, being fully satisfied that there was no one in their respective villages so base as not to be willing to perjure himself for the general weal. The old chief, my co-commissioner, was a venerable, and indeed respectable old man in his way, but acted as a mere partisan, not scrupling to use his influence and money in supporting his own party. The elders of the village, and indeed the whole community, were anxious to have any settlement of the business which would give them a portion of the land. On the other hand, they were rather afraid that I was zealous for the success of my own side, for it could not enter into their thoughts that I was simply anxious for the speedy adjustment of the boundary. My own party, who knew me better, were not so satisfied of my intentions towards them. Indeed, they well knew, from previous discussions, that I should not hesitate to uphold any settlement, however injurious to their interests, if I deemed it to be just.

When both sides were fairly wearied out, the weaker party, seeing that if they failed in obtaining a decision now, their case was gone for ever, with many fears and doubts for the result, at last agreed to select an umpire from their rivals. This appeared a great triumph to the British villagers, who already fancied themselves secure of victory. A day was given for consultation with the brethren preparatory to selecting the umpire. Ten o'clock A.M. on the following day was fixed, when all parties were to assemble, and, after appointing this important personage and signing a few simple papers in which every one agreed to abide by the decision under heavy penalties, we were all to adjourn to the spot and, in the presence of the elders of the surrounding villages, to superintend the demarcation of the boundary.

Accordingly, early on the following morning, every one was in attendance close to my tent, in a fine shady grove, which, for freshness of air and ample space, was much more pleasant than a confined tent. Here, then, I joined them at once, and called on our opponents to name their man. The elders all stood forth, and one venerable greybeard thus addressed me : 'Just one of the age ! In obedience to your instructions last night, we assembled in our choupal (public hall) the whole brotherhood, joint proprietors of our village lands. We explained to them the labour we had endured and the toils we had suffered in fighting the common cause in your court. We reminded them of the years which had passed since we had been wrongfully deprived of all use of the disputed lands. We enumerated the sums we had expended in fruitless attempts to obtain justice. We recalled to their remembrance the many

sahibs who had visited the spot, and attempted, but all in vain, to define the boundary, so strong and mighty were our tyrants. We pointed out that now, by the special interposition of the Deity and our good fortune, a Sahib had arrived in whose eyes both parties were alike, and who would never see the weak and friendless oppressed; that now was the time to secure a settlement of our claims, for, if we permitted the opportunity to pass, we might despair of ever getting our rights; that, accordingly, we had determined to select an umpire, even from the adversaries' village, but had delayed finally doing so until we could gather the opinion of all who were interested.'

The speaker then added that the whole village had unanimously approved of the proposal, and that he was ready to name the umpire, provided that the opposite party bound themselves, and that I promised, that, if the person so chosen failed to decide the boundary, I would decide it myself. To this I assented, and my villagers cordially agreed. The elder then said, 'We select Sahib Sing, son of Bulram, for our umpire, and we desire that he take his only son in his arms, and, laying his hand on his head, solemnly swear that he will faithfully and truly decide the boundary; that if he perjures himself he hopes that his son may die, that he may never again have a child, that he may perish root and branch, and that he may have neither any of kin to perform his funeral rites, nor offspring to continue his line to posterity.'

I may here remark that among all classes, but particularly among the Hindus, the first duty of a man, in a religious point of view, is to beget a son. To die and leave no son to perform the funeral rites to deliver the father from the hell called 'Put,' is considered the greatest of misfortunes. The natives of India are most attached parents, but the feeling towards the male offspring is quite extravagant. I recollect a merchant whose only son died. The loss turned the unfortunate father's head; he destroyed his wife and two little girls, and then hanged himself.

But to resumé. When the old man had finished speaking, he folded his arms and stepped back among his companions. 'Well, Sahib Sing,' said I, 'what say you?—do you consent?' Sahib Sing was a fine stout fellow of thirty, the son of one of the lately deceased headmen, and leader of one of the strongest and most influential 'thoks' or subdivisions of our village. Sahib Sing instantly agreed. All the documents, which had been previously prepared, were then signed, and things, at last, seemed in a fair train for settlement.

An orderly was forthwith despatched to Sahib Sing's house for his son. After waiting for half-an-hour a second was despatched, but still no child made its appearance. At length, when more than an hour had expired, the two orderlies returned, saying that the child was not to be found, and that both its mother and its grandmother said that they did not know what had become of it. Here was a new obstacle in our way. However,

being too well acquainted with the ways of the people to be so easily baffled, I told our party to depute two of their number to search out the child, telling them that I would give them half-an-hour to produce it, and that if they failed to do so the cause should be decided by myself. On this, they hurried off, accompanied by the orderlies, and in a very short time returned with the boy, whom, it seems, his mother had concealed in a wooden chest, but produced on being threatened by the headman. I was greatly pleased, and commended them for their expedition, to which they, with seeming sincerity, replied that they were as eager to have the matter brought to an issue as I could be, and that all they wanted was justice.

Anxious to lose no more time, we all mounted our horses. The little boy was put on the elephant with the old chief, and, accompanied by hundreds of the villagers, many of them mounted on their brood mares and still more on foot, we took our way to the disputed boundary. Our road took us near the village, and, as we approached, we were met by some hundreds of the women, headed by Sahib Sing's mother and wife, who insisted on the child's being given up, and reviled Sahib Sing, the headman, and indeed myself, with all the abuse in which the Hindustani language is so fluent. Nothing could exceed the uproar. They beat their breasts, tore their hair, and filled the air with their cries and lamentations. For some time I could hear naught but volleys of abuse, but at last gathered that the women, being fully impressed with the conviction that Sahib Sing's decision would cause the death of his child, were determined, at all hazards, to rescue it from destruction. It was in vain that I pointed out to them that everything depended on the father himself, that his child's life was in his own hands, and that it was clearly out of the question that he would give any but a just decision, in which case the boy was perfectly safe. They were by no means satisfied, and with tears and entreaties implored me to restore the boy to his mother. Sahib Sing in the meantime sat on his mare in dogged silence, and gave no assistance one way or the other. Seeing that all explanation was utterly useless I desired the cavalcade to proceed, upon which these viragoes seized my horse by the reins, declaring we should not proceed till the child was given up. It was with great difficulty and much delay that we finally got free from these ladies. Indeed, I believe that they would have succeeded in carrying off the child, had he not been perched out of their reach.

Many will, doubtless, exclaim against my conduct in thus lending myself to the miserable superstition of the people. To this I reply that the ordeal was their own proposition, not mine, and that nothing short of it would have satisfied the parties interested. They had often heard me laugh at different absurdities of their religion, on which occasions I had reasoned with them, but in vain. 'No, no,' they said; 'you English are

very wise, we will allow, but you do not understand our religion.' In fact, as far as my experience goes, time and labour are utterly lost in such discussions. The only way that will ever bring the natives to truer and more enlightened ideas, is the gradual progress of infant education. The attempts to change the faith of the adult population have hitherto failed, and will, I am afraid, continue to fail.

To resume my story. Having shaken off our assailants, we hurried on to the boundary, where, after duly examining and identifying the spot up to the point where the undisputed boundary of either village extended, Sahib Sing was called to do his duty as umpire—to take his child in his arms, and point out the ancient boundary line. In these discussions it is usual for the umpires, after examining, if necessary, the landmarks and features of the surrounding country, and satisfying themselves, to commence at the last undisputed landmark of the two villages, or, if the whole line is disputed, from the 'toka,' or spot which marks the boundary of their contiguous villages. From this point he walks forward, and whatever route he takes is considered to be the boundary. The arbitrator is, of course, permitted to question parties or make any inquiries he may deem necessary. This, however, is seldom done, as he is usually selected for his intimate local knowledge. In the present case not only Sahib Sing but, I verily believe, every man in the two villages, was perfectly acquainted with the true and ancient boundary.

Sahib Sing accordingly stood forward, took his child in his arms, looked at it, then at the surrounding multitude, turned again to his child, and, after a few moments' hesitation, put it down quietly, saying, 'I cannot decide the boundary.' There was a general murmur from the one side, and a half-suppressed cry of exultation from their opponents. I rode up immediately and called out, 'Come, come, Sahib Sing! this trick won't do; you shall decide the boundary or take the consequences.' Sahib Sing threw himself down, crying out, 'You may take my life, you may cut me in pieces, you may do with me what you please, but I never will decide the boundary.' 'Very good,' I replied, and turning to the headmen of his party, said, 'You have now exhausted every subterfuge and pretence, you have brought me to the spot, and the boundary must and shall be decided. I will give you one *ghurree* (twenty-four minutes): if you can induce Sahib Sing to do the duty, which he has voluntarily undertaken, which you have all refused to any of your opponents, and which they, as a last resource, have given up to you, well and good; if not, I will myself decide the boundary, and you know well what will be the result.'

After saying this, I jumped off my horse and, throwing the reins to my groom, sat down to smoke a cigar, and ruminate as to what was most advisable to do in the event, which seemed probable, of Sahib Sing persisting in not deciding the boundary.

For some reasons I would have been willing to undertake the decision. From all that I had gathered during the constant discussions, I was perfectly satisfied that my own party were in the wrong. Our opponents had, in a measure, trusted their case in my hands, and I was loth to see them injured. I was satisfied in my own mind that it was the intention of the arbitrator to decide the line in favour of his own party. The anxiety of that party that he should act, his own bearing during the discussion, the fears of the women for the child, all plainly indicated the probable result of the arbitration. I could not, it is true, have ascertained the precise position of the ancient landmarks, but, by making either party point out what they respectively deemed to be their own rights, and by collecting the opinions of the most respectable of the elders of neighbouring villages, I might have decided on a line approximating to the true one. Such a decision, however, would not have been popular; it would have disgusted my own people completely; and though I cared little about this, it would, in all probability, have led to future quarrels, and perhaps to the destruction of the boundary at some future period. It was a grand point, if possible, to secure a decision which would have the force of public opinion in its favour, a decision also which, being their own free act, either party would be ashamed to violate. The object, in short, was to make a settlement to which neither party could fairly object, and thereby secure the peace and tranquillity of this part of the district: and this seemed more likely to be obtained by Sahib Sing's decision than by any other means. If he gave it against his own people, their mouths were shut for ever, and if the other party lost, they lost by their own act, and, after all, were in no worse position than before.

While such reflections were passing in my mind, I now and then overheard the headmen whispering and talking with Sahib Sing a little on one side. They were evidently urging and even threatening him, and he was as vehemently refusing. At last Sahib Sing jumped up exclaiming, 'You are a set of double-faced rascals: you want me to kill my child to secure your boundary; you tell the Sahib one thing and me another; you have forced me to it—I will settle the boundary, but in a way you won't like.' Saying this, he hastily seized the child in his arms and called out, 'I am ready, I will show you the boundary!' I had jumped up on hearing his voice, and seeing from his excited manner that he was evidently in earnest, called to him, 'Well done, Sahib Sing! don't you be afraid of these fellows, I will protect you; only let us have the true boundary.'

The interest of all parties was now very great. The grass being rather high in some parts, Sahib Sing mounted his horse, with his child in front of him and with one of my orderlies to lead the animal according to his directions. As we rode forward, previous to reaching a particular point it was doubtful how he intended to act, but when he passed that

mark and turned to the right, the howl of execration which burst from our villagers showed that Sahib Sing, for once in his life at least, had acted fairly. 'Never mind!' I exclaimed; 'go on, Sahib Sing; don't mind these fellows.' The tumult which now ensued was very great. The villagers began pelting him with stones and clods of earth, and pressing on all sides towards him. I had some mounted men with me, and, perhaps, twice as many footmen, who endeavoured to keep back the crowd. It was to no purpose that I roared out and threatened them; the clamour drowned my voice; a few minutes' delay, and Sahib Sing would have been pulled from his mare. Seeing matters in such a state, I galloped up to one of the rioters, who was making himself very conspicuous in front of his party, urging and exciting them to the attack. The fellow, nothing daunted, stood his ground. Seeing that it was the critical moment, on which everything depended, I let the butt-end of my heavy hunting whip fall with such force on his head that he was down in an instant. His followers, seeing his fate, turned immediately and fell back. Order was quickly restored, and the boundary was carried to the end without further interruption.

The boundary being once defined, everything went on smoothly. Charcoal was buried at intervals, and pillars of strong masonry erected at particular points where the line suddenly bent, and a sketch map of the country, roughly though correctly prepared, was duly recorded. To this no opposition was offered. The battle had been fought and won, and either side had done their best. It was fate, and not any neglect on their part, which had decided it against my people. I saw Sahib Sing a few days after, and, on questioning him, he told me that though some had grumbled, on the whole his people were not dissatisfied. The general feeling seemed to be, 'What could he do?—he could not kill his own child.' The fact was, Sahib Sing had a strong following of friends and relatives in the village, so that the most sulky found it necessary to be satisfied with the common loss. Shere Sing, whose head I had so summarily broken, had also the audacity to make his appearance before I left. The fellow actually seemed to make a boast of his broken pate. 'Shere Sing,' said I, 'take warning and do not get into any more rows; it was well for you the other day that you did not lose your life.' 'Oh!' said he smiling, 'I have no excuse to make; I could never have shown my face in the village had I not resisted. That blow of yours, though it was rather too heavy, saved my honour. Every one declared that I had shown myself a real supporter of the village interests. May your Honour live a thousand years, but don't strike so hard another time!'

I will here conclude by remarking that the decision and the way in which it was brought about was highly lauded far and near, and, what was still better, it facilitated the settlement of many similar disputes. I had not another contested boundary that season.

Delhi: March 20, 1845.

Towards the end of 1839, before the time had come for the heavier portion of the settlement work at Etawa, John Lawrence and his friend Cumine were both taken seriously ill, and the district found itself deprived at once of its collector and its settlement officer. Cumine was the first to recover, and was at once moved down to a healthier climate at Allahabad, but John Lawrence's illness was much more severe. It was an attack of jungle fever. During nearly a month his life was in danger, and, for a time, it was despaired of. And here I may give an anecdote which he used to tell himself, and is not a little characteristic of his energy and determination. He had often been heard to say, in the abounding and jubilant strength of his youth, that he was sure that many a man need not die, if he made up his mind not to do so. But he was now rapidly becoming worse and appeared to be in a state of collapse. One day, the doctor who had been attending him told him that he feared he could hardly live till the following morning, and took leave of him accordingly. No sooner was he gone than his patient roused himself to the emergency. Now was the chance of putting his favourite maxim to the test. He determined not to die, and bade his servant give him a bottle of burgundy which lay in a box beneath his bed. He drank it off, and, next day, when the doctor called, by way of form, expecting to find that all was over, he found John Lawrence sitting up at his desk, clothed and in his right mind, and actually casting up his settlement accounts!

It is recorded of the Roman emperor Vespasian that, when he felt death coming upon him, he bade his servants set him on his feet, 'for an emperor ought to leave the world standing;' and standing he actually died. It was a truly imperial resolve. The result was different; but the spirit, the force of will, the keenness of the intellect, the strength of the affections which dies not with the dying physical powers—nay, is often strung in that supreme moment to its greatest tension, and is, surely, not the weakest earnest of a life beyond the grave—were the same in each. The Roman emperor had done his work, and the only thing that remained for him to do was to die like an emperor and like a man. Lawrence, whether he felt it or not—and it is hardly possible that he did not feel it—had but just finished the preparation for his great work.

> Something ere the end,
> Some work of noble note may yet be done,
> Not unbecoming men that strove with gods.
>
> . . . . . .

Tho' much is taken, much abides, and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will,
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

Such were the thoughts that John Lawrence may well have had in his mind. If they, or anything like them, did occur to him, he read in them his own character correctly enough. If they did not, the spirit, the mettle, the temper they imply were still there, and in any case, he lived long enough abundantly to justify them.

As soon as he was sufficiently recovered from his illness to bear the fatigue of moving, he was driven down, for the last time, through the 'familiar streets of old ruinous Etawa' to the ghaut, was put on board a boat, and, in company with his friend Major Wroughton, who had helped to nurse him through his illness, dropped down the 'clear cold stream of the Jumna' to Allahabad. Here he rejoined his colleague Cumine, who had gone thither in a country cargo-boat shortly before, and had spent a fortnight on the voyage. On November 19, they all set off again down the Ganges for Calcutta. The change of air and rest brought back health and strength apace, and gave them after their long starvation, as Cumine expressed it, the 'appetite of an ostrich.' At Ghazipore they met Robert Tucker, who was afterwards murdered in his own house during the Mutiny. They spent one day with him, a second at Dinapore, and a third at Monghir, walking about 'its grassy plain, formerly the bustling interior of the fort.' One night they passed at Chandernagore, and they arrived in Calcutta, at Spence's Hotel, on December 22. Here John Lawrence had a dangerous relapse, and, on his recovery, he was ordered by his doctor to go on furlough for three years, and, after a three months' stay in Calcutta, necessitated by his weak state, and another three months spent on the voyage home, he arrived in England in June 1840.

Here, then, ends the first stage of John Lawrence's Indian career, the period of his training and probation. He had passed through all the grades of a young civilian's education, not in their regular order, but, as often happened in the Delhi territory, piled one upon the other and mixed up together in such a way as to give him the greatest possible amount and variety of experience in the smallest possible space of time. He was fortunate, certainly, in the places

to which he had been posted—Delhi, Paniput, Gurgaon, Etawa—and he was fortunate also, on the whole, in the men with whom, whether as his superiors or his colleagues, he had hitherto been brought into contact. But here the work of fortune ended. His own energy, his own endurance, his own courage, his own self-reliance, his own enthusiasm for work, above all, his own sympathy with the natives, had done all the rest. If in these first ten years he had risen, as one who had the best right to speak expressed it, 'half a head above his fellows,' he owed that rise not to high birth or patronage or favour or luck of any kind, but to his own intrinsic merits. And, perhaps, I cannot better end these chapters which I have dedicated to the earlier and more adventurous, and probably, in some respects, the happier part of his career, than by quoting the graphic sketch given of it in the 'Leisure Hour,' 1860, by one who afterwards served under him for many years in the Punjab, was one of his most intimate and trusted friends, and was selected by him to write the life of his illustrious brother, Sir Henry Lawrence.

John Lawrence (says Sir Herbert Edwardes) soon had to leave head-quarters at Delhi and go out into the district; and it was there, away from all Europeans, thrown upon the natives for help, obedience, usefulness, success, and even sympathy, that the John Lawrence of great days was trained. He worked hard and made his 'omlah'—native functionary—do the same, ever on the watch to bar bribery, by being sole master in his own court. Then was his day of details—a day that comes once, and only once, to all apprentices—and he seized it, laying up a store of knowledge of all kinds, official, revenue, judicial, social, agricultural, commercial; learning, in fact, to *know* the races which it was his lot to rule. Work over, out into the fields with horse or gun; for his strong frame and hardy spirit loved wild sports. But ever an eye to business—some jungle lair of cutthroats to be explored, some scene of crime to be examined by the way, some slippery underling to be surprised. And so, home at sunset, with fine appetite for the simple meal that he eats who has others in the world to help. After that, more air—for the nights are hot—an easy chair outside in the bright moonlight, with our large John in it, without coat or waistcoat, and shirt-sleeves up over his elbows, his legs on another chair, a bowl of tea by his side, and a tobacco weed in his mouth, smoking grandly; altogether much at home, a giant in the act of refreshment. One by one the greybeards of the district drop in too; not particular in dress, but just as the end of the day left them, uninvited, but quite welcome, and squat, Eastern fashion, on their heels and ankles, in a respectfully feudal ring, about their Saxon khan, each wishing 'peace' as he sits down. A pleasant scene this of human black and white

mingling into grey under an Indian moon. The chat is all about the district and the people, bygone traditions of the last conquest by the Moguls, and how they parcelled it out to their great lords, who built those red-brick towers near the wells, still standing, though, happily, decayed by peace; the changes they have all seen since they were young; the beating of the sword and spear into the ploughshare; the disappearance of that celebrated breed of long-winded horses; the increase of buffaloes; the capture year by year, and one by one, of those renowned dacoits, of whom John Lawrence himself rode down the last; the great famine, and which villages died off and which lived through, as witness their present state, known to all sitting here; the debts and lawsuits that grew therefrom, and the endless case that's coming on in court to-morrow, about which John, listening, picks up some truths; and so on till midnight, when, the air being cool enough for sleep, the white khan yawns and the dark elders take their leave, much content with this kind of Englishman.

CHAPTER V.

FURLOUGH AND MARRIAGE. 1840-1842.

THE great difficulty with which the biographer of John Lawrence has to contend throughout his work, the absence of all journals, and of nearly all strictly private correspondence, is nowhere more felt than when, as now, at the time of his three years' furlough, his public life crosses and becomes intertwined with that of his family. It might have been expected that it would have been easier, to say the least, to give an adequate description of John Lawrence in the midst of his family at Clifton than to picture him, the one white man among thousands of dusky faces in the wilds of Paniput or among the robber tribes of Gurgaon. But such, unfortunately, is not the case. It is only from a few waifs and strays of information which it has, probably, cost me as many weeks to collect and to winnow as it will take my readers minutes to glance through, that I am able to say anything at all of John Lawrence's family, of the changes which he must have found in them, and they in him, after his ten years' absence, and of the way in which he employed his unwonted time of leisure. And this paucity of the materials on which a biographer usually most depends seems all the more strange, when contrasted with the superabundant wealth of the materials which the biographer of Sir Henry Lawrence found ready to his hand. Besides the inestimable advantage of an intimate and lifelong acquaintance with the subject of his memoir, and his presence at many of the scenes which he describes, Sir Herbert Edwardes appears to have had in his possession an unlimited number of private letters written by Sir Henry Lawrence to the different members of his family, and by the different members of his family to him; of journals kept by Sir Henry himself, by his mother, and by his wife; finally, of letters written by that talented wife to his and her friends in various parts of the world, and giving graphic pictures, drawn on the spot, of the

various actions in which he bore a part. Of all these advantages I am in great part destitute, and all that I can do is to make the best of such scanty materials as I have been able to get together.

It has been suggested, whether malevolently or otherwise, as an explanation of the abundance of materials for the inner life of Henry and of their paucity for that of John, that, in quite early days, the friends and relations of the elder brother foresaw that he would be a great man, while they failed to descry any indications of a brilliant future in the younger; they therefore preserved the letters of the one and destroyed those of the other. There may be some truth in this, for there can be no doubt that John was of a tardier development than Henry, and that some of the qualities which fascinated people most in the elder brother were wanting in the younger, or, at all events, lay deeper beneath the surface. But, apart from this, the differences in the character and temperament of the two brothers will go far, I think, to account for the different nature of their correspondence. Henry, his brain seething with half-developed thoughts and his heart stirred by warm and over-mastering emotions, found habitual relief in pouring them forth in letters. John felt no such need, or not to the same degree. He seldom wrote without an immediate and practical object. When this was to be secured his pen was that of a forcible as well as of a ready writer. And, once more, it will be remembered, also, that the letters which he did write continuously throughout his life to his favourite sister, and in which he, undoubtedly, did pour out without restraint all that he thought and felt, were, as I have already related, deliberately destroyed by him after her death.

John Lawrence reached his home at Clifton. But it was not the home which he had left. No one, I suppose, ever returned to his home after an absence of ten years, especially if his family happened to have been a large one, without finding at least as much cause to miss the absent as to rejoice in those that are present. Of those who loved him, and whom he loved best, he will be likely to find

> That the old friends all are fled,
> And the young friends all are wed,

and that, even of those who are neither the one nor the other, some at least will necessarily be dead to him. Ten years are a large slice, as many a returned Anglo-Indian has found to his cost, of the allotted threescore and ten, and the gap made by them in interests and occu-

pations and sympathies, even between hearts that are naturally loving and sympathetic, is so wide that the currents of life, which have issued from the same fountain-head, and are destined, it may be, like the two great rivers of China, to approach one another again towards their close, are often found, in the dead level of middle life, to be meandering, like those same two rivers, in channels which are very far apart.

Two great changes had taken place in the Clifton home since John Lawrence had left it. The fine old father, who had entertained his son during his youthful walks with so many stories of his adventurous campaigns, and who might, had he lived, have listened now, in his turn, in the chair of dozing age, to stories of adventures at least as strange and as stirring from the lips of that same son, had ended his rugged life in peace, in May 1835, at the age of seventy-three. His eldest son, Alexander, who is said to have been his favourite, had returned from Madras just in time to gladden his father's eyes, and then to close them in death.

The other change was almost as great. John's eldest sister Letitia, whose pre-eminent claims on their affection and respect had, from their earliest youth, been so promptly recognised by all her brothers, had herself left the parental home, and married a venerable old clergyman, Mr. Hayes, who seems to have been unknown to the family before.

Happily, the kind and simple-hearted mother whom I have described at the outset of this biography, was still living and in comparative comfort, though not upon the fortune left her by her husband. Ever ready, as he had been in his Irish generosity, to share his last crust or his last shilling with a friend, the old veteran had left her nothing but his name, his spirit, and his sons. She was living therefore on the proceeds of a fund which, all unknown to her, had, for years past, been gradually accumulating, from the contributions of her four gallant sons—not one of whom had more than a bare sufficiency of this world's goods—in India. It was called by them the 'Lawrence Fund,' and had been started, in the first instance, by Henry. It was Henry who—to quote the words of a letter of his own—'had rather dunned' the more tardy and cautious John into taking it up at first, but had soon found, as the same letter generously goes on to acknowledge, that, once committed to the scheme, John had put 'all the other brothers to shame' by the zeal that he had thrown into it. It was John, henceforward, who managed the

fund, who contributed largely to it, who directed the successive investments, and, more than this, acted as the financier of the family generally.

Henry, lavishly generous, like his father, of his money and careless of the future, would not, as he often admitted, have saved the barest competency for his wife and family had it not been for his brother John's taking his affairs in hand. John, on the other hand, had a sense of the true value of money. He was not niggardly—far from it, as one or two out of a score of anecdotes which I hope hereafter to quote will show. He was at all times most generous. But his generosity was tempered by prudence, and by a sense of the relative claims of others upon him. And, better far than being prodigal of his money, he was prodigal of the pains that he took in saving and in securing it for other people. He managed in this way, purely as a labour of love, the incomes of a large number of persons quite unconnected with him, who were unable, or thought they were unable, to manage them for themselves.

A third change in the family at Clifton must not be passed over. The old nurse Margaret, who had tended all the members of the family from infancy up to manhood, whose room had been a sanctuary of peace and tenderness and repose in a somewhat stiff and stern household, and who had, of course, continued to live on with the family long after her proper work was done, as the member most indispensable to each and all of them, had passed away. There are few ties more sacred and more indissoluble than those which unite the younger, ay, and the elder members of a family to an old and trusted nurse. Witness it some of the most exquisite passages in all literature, from the time of Deborah the aged nurse of Rebekah, in the Book of Genesis, and 'Allon Bachuth,' 'the oak of tears,' or from Eurykleia, the nurse and *confidante* alike of Telemachus and Penelope in the 'Odyssey,' right down to the 'Lord of the Isles' and the 'Lady of the Lake,' or again to Tennyson's 'nurse of ninety years,' whose true childward instincts tapped the fountain of the newly widowed mother's tears, and reminded her that her husband's child was something which made life still worth living.

John Lawrence would have been unlike himself had he not felt the blank deeply. But it is not the least touching trait in a character so strong, so active, so practical, and which could, when occasion required, be so stern, so unbending, so iron, that his first journey after his return to England was a pilgrimage to the spot in a distant county

in which his old nurse was buried. Many memories must have been awakened within him as he stood beside her grave, but perhaps none so freshly as that morning in Ostend in the year of the battle of Waterloo, when his childish championship of his nurse disarmed the suspicions of the magistrate, and he returned proudly home with her, thinking that henceforward he must take charge of her rather than she of him. What wonder that many years later, in India, her memory was still fresh within him, and that he could find no fitter name for one of his daughters than that of his old nurse Margaret?

How the aged mother welcomed her son John, the chief manager of the family purse and a generous contributor to her income, we do not know from any written document, for I have been unable to meet with any letter, or entry, at all analogous to that in which she notes the change which three years' absence had produced in her elder son Henry, when he had first returned from India. It is clear that he did not recover from the effects of his illness for some time. But all the accounts which have reached me, represent him as in the most exuberant spirits, travelling about from one country to another, seeing all that was to be seen, in full pursuit of what is commonly supposed to be the leading object of a young civilian on furlough from India, and enjoying all the vicissitudes of the pursuit, its ups and its downs, its hopes and its fears, in a way which is highly indicative of his good-humoured frankness and manly directness of character.

In August, two months after he landed, we find him at Glasgow. There he met his Etawa friend, Cumine, and took a tour with him through the Western Highlands—a tour which was doubly interesting to him, as Sir Walter Scott's names and localities were always fresh in his memory. Of Scott, indeed, in common with so many of his generation, he was passionately and justly fond. His boyhood had been nursed upon 'the great enchanter's' writings, especially upon the more historical of his novels. They were among the few books which he was either able, or disposed, to read in the heyday of his working life in India; and one of the very last books read to him by his lady secretary, Miss Gaster, long after his sight had gone, and not a few premonitory symptoms of his approaching end had come upon him, was 'Guy Mannering'—read then for I am afraid to say what number of times!

In September, he went to Ireland, and revisited Foyle College and the ramparts of Londonderry. And it was while he was on a visit to Mr. Young of Culdaff House, in County Donegal, the squire

of the parish, and near neighbour of its rector, the Rev. Richard Hamilton, that he met for the first time the lady who was eventually to share his destinies. Nothing appears to have been either said or done then which at all implied what was to follow a year later; but 'all the Hamilton family felt that a new and wonderful element had come into their lives, and his vivacity and stories were a theme of constant conversation among them.' The red-hot Tory creed, in which they had been naturally brought up, received many a rough and kindly shock from the reforming views of the young Indian civilian.

Later on in the autumn, John Lawrence paid a visit to the Continent, and took up his quarters for some months at Bonn with his much-loved sister-in-law, Mrs. George Lawrence, whose husband was in Afghanistan. 'He kept open house,' says Colonel Ramsay, who met him there, 'and was a great favourite with many of the students. Amongst them were Prince Holstein, now the King of Denmark, Prince Frederick of Hesse, his future brother-in-law, Prince Mecklenberg-Schwerin, the present Sir Vincent Corbet, myself and others, and many a pleasant evening we passed in his house. Years afterwards, when I was on the Headquarters Staff at the Horse Guards, on the arrival in this country of Prince Christian of Denmark, formerly Prince Holstein, with his daughter, now the Princess of Wales, and the Prince of Hesse, they all, remembering me as a fellow-student at Bonn, asked with much interest what had become of Mr. John Lawrence, of whose hospitalities they retained so pleasant a recollection.' These hospitalities, it will be easily understood, soon exhausted his purse, which was not, at that time, a heavy one, and he was obliged early in the year to return to England and live more economically among his friends.

In the April following, he paid a fortnight's visit to Mr. and Mrs. Hayes, who were then living in Marlborough Buildings, Bath; and I am fortunately able to quote here some graphic reminiscences of him as he then was, contributed by Mrs. Kensington, who, as a young girl, was living with Mrs. Hayes, and managed, during this fortnight, to lay the foundation of a lifelong friendship with him.

John Lawrence (she says) spent a fortnight in the house, and the general impression which he left on my mind is one of wonderful energy and straightforward going at whatever was to be done. The two great objects of his life just then were to recover his health, and to find a wife fit to be a helpmeet indeed, and it was the great amusement of my sister

and myself to watch the business-like way in which he pursued both objects. He still looked rather gaunt and ill, and as he had already won a considerable reputation I had at first been inclined to think him formidable, till I saw him on the sofa with his arm round his sister, whom he always called, 'Lettice dear.' His love for her was a distinguishing feature, and used to be displayed in a way that was very surprising to those who regarded her as we did, as a woman far removed from the lightness of ordinary mortals. He would romp with her and keep up a perpetual chaff, finding a continual source of fun in the age and peculiarities of Mr. Hayes, for whom he had nevertheless a great respect, though he used to take great delight in teasing her about him, and saying that he was the very model of a decoy thug. His conversation was always lively and interesting, abounding in anecdotes of his curious experiences in India, of the natives, and of horses, of which last he was specially fond. He was very indifferent to any of the luxuries of life or refinements of society, and disposed to mock at those who laid much stress on them as necessaries. A 'cakey-man' was his favourite term of contempt for any one who pretended to much elegance and refinement. At breakfast it was his habit to cut off the crust of the loaf, and, having made his meal upon it and a simple cup of tea, he was ready for conversation, and would keep us all amused with his account of his adventures the night before at the various parties he went to in the hope of meeting with the possible wife, who was always spoken of as 'the calamity.' He had very decided and clear ideas as to the style of woman he wished for his companion. Good health, good temper, and good sense, were the three essential requisites, and if they happened to be combined with good looks so much the better; but he at once rejected all temptation to be fascinated by the regular ball-going beauties of Bath.

His manners and appearance were utterly unlike the ordinary young men we met in Bath. It was difficult not to feel a little shocked at first by his roughness and absence of conventionality; still there was so much force and originality apparent in his whole character, that one soon forgot the defects of manner, and became interested in his conversation. As I remember him, he seemed to me to embody Professor Henry Morley's notion of the qualities which have given to Englishmen their proud position in the world, namely, 'the determination to find out the right and get it done; find out the wrong and get it undone.' I have a lively recollection of the pains he took to convince me of the justice of admitting Jews into Parliament. Much of his talk was about his horses—how he would keep them loose in his tent, and how the natives who came in, always made their salaam to the horse after paying their respects to him. He would tell also how, when he wanted game to shoot, he would set the native musicians to play in the woods to frighten the pigs. Later on in the same year (1841) we saw him again at Lynton, in

North Devon, where Mr. and Mrs. Hayes always spent the summer. The matter of finding a 'calamity' was still undecided, and he was still on the search.

It was during his stay at Lynton that John Lawrence paid a visit to his friend and relative, the famous John Sterling, who was then living at Falmouth. In the near neighbourhood of Falmouth was Penjerrick, the now almost classic abode of the Fox family—the home of everything that was pure and lovely and of good report. It was not likely that Sterling would allow John Lawrence to leave his house without introducing him to a family amongst whom he was so frequent and welcome a visitor; and in the 'Journals and Letters of Caroline Fox,' one of the most lovable of women, I find the following entry referring to the visit of the young Indian civilian:—

1841. *May* 10.—Amusing day. J. Sterling has a friend and connection here, a Mr. Lawrence, an Indian judge, and he brought him to call. India the principal topic. Lawrence was describing an illness in which he was most tenderly nursed and borne with by his native servants. 'Yes,' said Sterling, 'patience, submission, and fortitude are the virtues which characterise an enslaved nation; their magnanimity and heroism are all of the passive kind.' Lawrence spoke of the stationary kind of progress which Christianity was making amongst them. When a native embraces this new creed, he retains his old inveterate prejudices and superadds only the liberty of the new faith. This Lawrence has repeatedly proved, so much so that he would on no account take one of these converts into his service. All his hope is in the education of the children, who are bright and intelligent. The Indians will from politeness believe all you tell them, and if you speak of any of Christ's miracles, they make no difficulty, but directly detail one more marvellous of which Mohammed was the author, and expect your civility of credence to keep pace with theirs. If you try to convince them of any absurdities or inconsistencies in the Koran, they stop you with, 'Do you think that such an one as I should presume to understand it?' Sterling remarked, 'Have you never heard anything like that in England?'

May 24.—Joseph Bonaparte, his son and grandson, in the harbour (Falmouth); Barclay and Lawrence visited them under the shade of the American consulate. They shook hands and conversed with the old man for some time, and admired exceedingly for some time the little boy, who is the image of Napoleon. His father, the Prince Charles Bonaparte, a fine-looking man.[1]

[1] *Caroline Fox: Her Journals and Letters*, p. 238, etc. Edited by Horace N. Pym. Smith, Elder, & Co. 1882.

‹ Once more, in June 1844, John Lawrence returned to Ireland, leaving the fashionable and ball-going beauties of Bath and Cheltenham and Lynton—

> for some three careless moons
> The summer pilots of an empty heart
> Unto the shores of nothing

—without regret behind him ; and there, on his renewed meeting with the young Irish maiden, the best part of whose life had been passed in the wilds of Donegal, and who combined, as the result proved, all the charms which we usually associate with a beautiful Irish girl—simplicity, sprightliness, vivacity, and grace—with those more solid qualities which were to make her the worthy companion and sharer and comforter of the most laborious and heroic of lives, even to the very end, he found as the result of his prolonged 'search' among girls who might have momentarily attracted him, that

> Such touches were but embassies of love,
> To tamper with the feelings ere he found
> Empire for life.

An empire for life indeed it was, as the course of this biography, without, it is to be hoped, lifting too much of the veil which hangs, and ought to hang, before the bridal chambers of the heart, will abundantly show. And John Lawrence found that love henceforward not only ruled his life, but trebled it within him.

But of what stock did Harriette Catherine Hamilton come? There is no part of a biography which is apt to appear so tedious and unnecessary to the general reader as the, perhaps, inevitable paragraphs which give the genealogy of its subject. Yet even the most democratic of critics will admit that family and descent count for not a little in the formation of character. While I avoid, therefore, such details as may be found in Sir Bernard Burke and similar authorities, I propose to say just so much of the ancestry and antecedents of the Mrs. John Lawrence that was to be, as may show the kind of family in which her husband was to find so worthy a companion.

The Hamiltons, offshoots of the ducal family of that name in Scotland, had first crossed into Ireland in the time of Queen Elizabeth. One of them, who had done good service to King James in the country of his adoption, was rewarded by him with large estates in County Down, and was created Viscount Clandeboye and Dufferin. His other brothers also became large landowners in Ireland, and from

one of these Harriette Hamilton was directly descended. Her grandfather, James Hamilton, of Sheep Hill in County Dublin, is said to have married three times, and to have been blessed with a family of truly patriarchal dimensions. Sir Bernard Burke credits him with thirty-six sons and daughters; but the family tradition runs that there were thirty-nine in all—a tradition confirmed by the witticisms current at the time, some of which, turning on the Protestant orthodoxy of a family which owed so much to it, compared them to the Thirty-nine Articles; while others, taking the prudential view, suggested that they were more akin to the 'forty stripes save one!'

Richard Hamilton, Harriette's father, was first presented to a living ten miles from Dublin, in County Meath. Like many of the livings of the good old times, it was considered to be a good living because there was so little to do in it. But the new rector was a man of great energy and courage, who, when he found that he had no work to do, would be sure to make it for himself; and having been appointed a justice of the peace, he found a field for his superabundant energies in playing, like his future son-in-law, the Collector-Magistrate of Delhi, the double *rôle* of policeman and magistrate.

At that time, the county of Meath was sadly disturbed by a combination of agrarian conspirators called 'carders'—men who tortured their victims with an implement armed with long steel teeth like the 'cards' used for dressing wool. Their outrages had produced great consternation in the district, and every effort was required to suppress them.

Every night (says a son of his, the present Archdeacon Hamilton) my father used to leave his home, sometimes at the head of a small party, sometimes accompanied only by one trusted servant, his factotum, Andrew Rabb. These night expeditions were much disliked by his household, who lived in dread from the moment that the chain and bars were closed across the hall door till the return of their master in the early morning; and many an amusing story he used to tell us of his adventures in these patrols. Among others, one especially recurs to my memory. With his trusted attendant he came by chance upon a notorious offender, for whom search had long been made, and succeeded in apprehending him. The capture took place at a great distance from his home, and in an unfrequented road which offered abundant opportunities for escape. My father and Rabb were both of them stout large men, and well mounted, but their prisoner was nimble as a hare, and the difficulty was to prevent his escape on the way back. While my father held the two horses, Rabb clung like grim death to his prisoner, but exclaimed

while doing so, 'We shall never be able to get him safe home.' My father, quick in resource, replied, 'Cut the waistband of his breeches,' these being the nether garments universally worn at that day, and still worn by many of the peasants in County Meath. This done, their prisoner, finding himself, despite his agility, unable to run or jump, surrendered at discretion, and, before morning, was safely lodged in jail.

Would that there were a few hundred men like Richard Hamilton in the outlying districts of Ireland now! How many outrages would a Spartan rampart of this kind have rendered impossible or promptly punished; how many measures of coercion would it have rendered unnecessary! What dismay and panic would the neighbourhood of one such man spread among the miserable creatures whose highest deed of prowess is to lurk in groups, with blackened faces, for their unprotected victims behind a loopholed wall, or to maim and mutilate the unoffending cattle of those who have had the courage and the honesty to discharge their obligations! In the year 1815, this energetic guardian of civil order married Catherine Tipping, a girl of great personal attractions and charm of manner. And a few years later—those being the days of pluralism—he was given the two rich livings of Culdaff and Cloncha in County Donegal, and he moved, with his infant family, from the rich and populous county of Meath, within ten miles of Dublin, to the remote and bleak coast of Ulster. The young wife's heart, it is said, sank within her when she first came in sight of her new home, and she burst into a flood of tears. But these were first impressions only, and the warm hearts of the friends she found, and the friends she made there, proved to be in inverse ratio to the bleakness and solitude of its first aspect. She soon came to love Donegal for its own sake, and was loved by the people in turn. It was in this fine bracing climate, with its beautiful and bold sea-coast, that Harriette Hamilton spent her earliest years. Her one sister had been married to Dr. Evory Kennedy, an hereditary friend of the family, whose interesting reminiscences of his own and of the Lawrences' school-days I have already quoted; and the chief events in her quiet life were, henceforward, her visits to her sister's home in Dublin, and the periodical return of her two brothers from school and college for their vacation.

Few girls (she says) lived in a more simple way, but I was very happy, and enjoyed an active out-of-door life, taking in health and strength. My mother was very delicate, and I had plenty to do in looking after her and my father, who had then become an invalid. I used to read a good deal

with my mother, and although girls of the present day would have thought this a dull life, somehow or other I never felt it so. Our pleasures were few and simple, but, such as they were, we thoroughly enjoyed them, and our home was most truly a happy one. My mother's life was full of interest, for she helped my father in all his work. I well remember going about among the poor with her, and how she was welcomed and loved by them all. My father was, I think, more liberal in his views than the clergy of his day in Ireland usually were, for he warmly approved of the National Education movement, and was always on good terms with the Roman Catholic clergy of the county. My mother would visit among the Roman Catholics as well as amongst our own people, and the priests never made any objection.

Thus Harriette Hamilton's early life passed peacefully on, till the arrival of John Lawrence with his unbounded vivacity, his marked originality of character, his splendid *physique*, and his stories of Indian adventure—with which the hunter-down of the 'carders' of Meath must have had not a little personal sympathy—came across its calm and even current. The engagement lasted two months only, and on August 26, 1841, the marriage took place. It was of course a great event in the little parish; and rich and poor, high and low, Catholic and Protestant, came from far and near to do honour to the bride and her family.

A marriage is never to those who look below the surface a time of unmixed gladness. To the family principally concerned a wedding is only less solemn and less melancholy than a funeral. If new ties are formed, old ones are inevitably broken; and that two people may have a happy future, many more than two have to break a chief link with a happy past. The common saying that the parents of the bride do not lose a daughter, but only gain a son, seldom wholly true, is never less true than in the case of a marriage with an Indian official. Here the parents lose their daughter, and the mere distance of her future home precludes them from feeling that they have, in any true sense of the word, gained a son. Such a marriage, therefore, puts the unselfish love of the parents to the severest possible test. But it was a test which the Hamilton parents were able to stand; and they would not allow, so far as they could help it, the shadow of a shade to rest upon their daughter's happiness. The day of the wedding was—for the Irish climate—a fine one, and John Lawrence and his wife have often laughed together since over the rapid come-down which they underwent—the start in a carriage and

four, amidst the cheering and shouting and loving wishes that followed then; while, on the second day, the carriage and four was reduced to a carriage and pair; and that, again, on the third day, to a jaunting-car and single horse!

To the unique and lifelong happiness of the union thus cemented, the whole course of this biography will bear witness, direct or indirect. I will quote here two testimonies only, and both shall be those of John Lawrence himself—the one conscious and deliberate, the other wholly unpremeditated and almost unconscious. In the fragment of the autobiography which I have so often quoted, and which was written, as I gather, about thirty years later, towards the close of his Viceroyalty, he writes: 'In August 1841 I took perhaps the most important, and certainly the happiest, step in my life—in getting married. My wife has been to me everything that a man could wish or hope for.'

The other testimony is still more to the point, because, as I have said, it is unconscious and, in its neatness and its intensity, is eminently characteristic of the man. John Lawrence was sitting, one evening, in his drawing-room at Southgate, with his wife, his sister Letitia, and other members of the family, and all of them were engaged in reading. Looking up from his book, in which he had been engrossed, he discovered, to his surprise, that his wife had left the room. 'Where's mother?' said he to one of his daughters. 'She's upstairs,' replied the girl. He returned to his book, and, looking up again a few minutes later, put the same question to his daughter, and received the same answer. Once more he returned to his reading, and, once more, he looked up with the same question on his lips. His sister Letitia here broke in: 'Why, really, John, it would seem as if you could not get on for five minutes without your wife.' 'That's why I married her,' replied he.

The honeymoon was spent on the Continent. In a tour, which lasted from September 1841 to the following March, John Lawrence and his wife visited Belgium, France, Switzerland, and Italy. The birthday of the bride (November 14) was celebrated at Florence, and they reached Rome towards the close of the month. The mornings there were occupied in vigorous sight-seeing, and the evenings in as vigorous studies in Italian till the unhealthy climate produced the effect that might have been expected on a constitution which had not yet quite recovered from the still worse climate of India; and a letter of John Lawrence's to his friend Cumine speaks regretfully of his

inability 'to enjoy life in a place where there was so much to see and and do as in Rome.' They were accompanied during a part of their tour by Mr. and Mrs. Hayes. 'The honeymoon is past,' says Letitia, writing to a friend, 'and I have not seen a frown on either brow. I find that my brother can love his wife, and his sister none the less.'

The terrible news of the rising of the Afghan tribes on our demoralised army at Cabul, and of his brother George's captivity and too probable death, reached John Lawrence at Naples, and must have brought something more than 'a frown' to his brow. And in a letter, dashed off in the hottest haste to his sister-in-law, the wife of his brother Henry, he writes as follows. It will be observed that the want of grammar is appalling. But, as in the well-known letter written off by the Duke of Marlborough to his wife after the battle of Blenheim, where spelling and grammar were, naturally enough, thrown to the winds, these signs of excitement add something to its historical interest. It is the first letter in which he alludes to Afghanistan—a subject which was seldom afterwards to be long absent from his mind —whether he was following in spirit, a few weeks later, from England the march of the 'army of vengeance;' whether, as chief ruler of the Punjab, he was primarily responsible for the safety of that most difficult, and perhaps 'unscientific,' but certainly, under his care, well-defended frontier; whether, as Governor-General, he was taking precautions to avoid all entanglement with its internal politics; or whether, once more, he was protesting, as he did protest with his latest breath, against a policy which—whether he was right or wrong—he thought to be impolitic and unjust, certain to involve calamities like those of which he had heard, thirty years before, when he was at Naples, and dangerous to the security of our whole Indian empire. The letter, therefore, is interesting alike from a psychological and from a historical point of view, and I give it without any attempt to improve its grammar or punctuation. The sense is generally clear enough.

Naples: March 23, 1842.

My dear Honoria, I hardly know how to write to you the last mail has brought us such dreadful accounts the death of Sir Wm. [Macnaghten] poor George's imprisonment and probable death and the reported destruction of the whole Cabul army. Is certainly an amount of dreadful which has seldom come from India certainly never in my mind. The papers seem to think that neither George's nor MacKenzie's life were safe, I think that as they did not kill them at the moment of seizure they will

spare their lives to exchange for their own prisoners. We are all here prepared for the worst, tho' as long as there is life there is hope. It seems that the whole business was dreadfully mismanaged—the allowing the supplies to be in a place where they could be cut off—the dividing the force; with a river without Bridge between them and lastly the consuming and wasting the morale of the force in desultory attacks, instead of attacking them at once. Altogether shows a want of management. I trust that the rumours of the force being attacked and destroyed subsequent to their evacuation will not prove true. It would seem to me to have been most feasible to have retreated through the open country to Ghuzni You may fancy our anxiety for news. The general feeling previous to this disaster was that the sooner we get out of Afghanistan the better and Lord Ellenborough was said to have gone out with these views. I do not think now that we can leave the country without wiping off our disgrace—however enough of this. I propose leaving Naples on the 28th if the weather is fine for Marseilles by steam and thence to Paris where I shall be two days, and then to England. I am anxious to be there to look after Charlie and her chicks in the event of poor George's being no more. I heard from Mr. S. a couple of days ago it seemed they had not then told her of the dreadful news—should George be gone I am his executor . . . what you do pray write to me as Henry will have little time for such things pray keep him out of Afghanistan if you can help it. I wish I was back in India all my thoughts and feelings are there. I am heartily tired of Italy. Letitia and Mr. Hayes travel back by land and probably will not be in England before June. They say eleven thousand troops are to be sent out to India though what is wanted with so many I don't see except with China. I don't think we have seen the last of that business—it seems quite interminable. This letter goes direct to Naples in the consul's bag. I wrote two or three by that route. Mind and write any particulars which transpire about George. I still live in hope that he may survive.

Yours ever affectionately,
JOHN.

On the same day and across the same sheet of paper, his sister Letitia writes in similar, but naturally more vehement, strains of distress.

'The calamities of India have at last opened upon our family, and one of the best and least selfish is the first victim. The vial is opened, but when and where will it close? I get up in the morning with fresh hope after communion with our abiding and unchanging Guide and Surety, but, throughout the day, the feeble heart sinks, and all seems the blackness of despair.' Then, fearing that her other

brother Henry's turn would come next, she turns in an agony of grief to him, implores him to return to England, telling him that he will be sure to find work to do at home, and that all her own and her husband's property would be willingly shared with him and his. 'So come back, beloved ones, come back; our poor mother! I cannot bear to think of her. I know the manner of her grief. As to the poor wife, what can be said for so huge a sorrow?'

And so the honeymoon ended, as it did for so many others, in that sad year, in sore anxiety, in sickening fears and almost more sickening hopes—for they were to be hopes long deferred—among all the branches of the Lawrence family. John Lawrence and his wife hurried back to London to be ready, in case their worst fears should prove true, to take charge of the widow and her children. But here he was seized with a long and dangerous illness which made his doctors tell him that he must give up all idea of returning to India. This was serious news enough, for his leave was drawing to a close. There was no apparent opening for him in England, and it was necessary to come to a decision at once. With his intense interest in his work in India, it did not probably cost him much to say that, whatever the risk might be, he was resolved to run it. 'If I can't live in India,' was his characteristic remark, 'I must go and die there.'

On his partial recovery, he went over to Ireland for a change, and paid a farewell visit to his wife's relations. He spent September at Clifton with his aged mother, whose heart was gladdened by the sight of 'nine of her children, and ten of her grandchildren' assembled around her, and he sailed from Southampton for India, by the Overland Route, on October 1, 1842. It was the last meeting, as neither of them could have failed to anticipate, between the mother and the son; but the pang of parting was lessened, at least to her motherly heart, by the knowledge that he was not returning to India alone. 'To see you happily married,' she had written to him while he was at Etawa in June 1839, 'will gladden my old heart ere I quit life;' and, on the day before his marriage (on August 25, 1841), she had thus poured out her feelings in a letter to her son Henry: 'I cannot express how rejoiced I am that he [John] will, please God, take out with him an honest Irish lass from among his relatives, and so well known to them all. Marcia's account of her, will, I am sure, bear the test. I wish I could say what I think of her from my own experience, but the knowledge of his happiness is enough for me.' The opportunity

for forming her own judgment in the important matter had now come and gone, and had convinced her that her son was not only as happy as he could be, but that he had the best of grounds for being so.

And so John Lawrence went out a second time from England to India ; still almost unnoticed and unknown ; his great capacities still unrecognised, and his brilliant future still not anticipated, even by his most intimate friends and relations, and he himself not a little anxious —and, as the result showed, not without reason—as to the occasion which India might now have for his services. He was to return to England, twenty years later, the observed of all observers, with his name a household word in India and in England, and with a whole people, whose best characteristics he so well combined, flocking from all parts to welcome him, and happy if they could catch but a sight of the grand and now familiar features of the ruler of the Punjab and the man who had done more than any other single man to save our Indian Empire.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FIRST AFGHAN WAR. 1838–42.

DURING the three years' absence of John Lawrence in England, the gloomiest and most disgraceful chapter of Anglo-Indian history—it may almost be said of the whole course of English history—had been brought to its close.

The story of the Afghan war is a thrice-told tale, and its moral, it is to be hoped, is graven with a pen of iron on the tablets of the nation's heart. With its design and progress John Lawrence had, of course, nothing to do. At first sight, therefore, it would seem to lie beyond the field, already sufficiently vast, of his biography. But, though he exercised no influence on the Afghan war, it exercised so profound an influence on him; it helped to give so decided a bent to the whole of his subsequent administration, whether as Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, or as Governor-General of India; it has so dominated the foreign policy of eight successive Governors-General during a period of some thirty-five years—that it is essential to a right understanding alike of John Lawrence himself, of his actions, and of his time, to indicate, in bare outline, the general causes and the successive steps which prepared the way for the catastrophe.

The story is thrilling and yet monotonous—thrilling, for the ruin was so terrible and so complete; monotonous, for there is no single step from first to last upon which folly, or worse than folly, has not placed its ineffaceable stamp. A fatal infatuation, to which the pen of the greatest of the Greek tragedians could, perhaps, alone have done justice, seems to clog the steps of those whom God has determined to destroy, and has therefore first deprived of their senses. The Indian career of Lord Auckland began with the first, and ended with the last, act of this prolonged and gloomy drama.

The immediate cause of a state of things which seemed to call

for the coolest deliberation and the most straightforward policy on the part of English statesmen, but served instead to deprive them, for the time, alike of their senses and of their consciences, was the rapid progress of Russia. What was the nature and extent of that progress? Nobody who studies the subject seriously will deny that it was rapid and startling enough. On the side of Europe, within a period of some fifty years, Finland had been conquered, the Turkish Empire had been overrun and deprived of some of its fairest provinces, and the partition of Poland, that crowning iniquity of modern times, had been planned and carried out. On the side of Asia, Russia had spread southwards from Siberia, over the vast steppes traversed by the wandering Kirghis, till she had planted her forts on the Jaxartes, had looked wistfully towards the Oxus, and had begun to threaten the independence even of the three 'independent' khanates of Khiva, Bokhara, and Khokand. More formidable even than this, she had conquered the northern provinces of Persia, and had made that empire a mere puppet in her hands. The repeated embassies and subsidies and promises of the British to the Persian Court—promises, it must be added, which were evaded in a rather questionable manner when the pinch came—had failed to secure an alliance between Persia and England, and the advance, therefore, of the Persians on the semi-independent principality of Herat, which was then, as now, one of the pivots of the Eastern problem, might, not unreasonably, be regarded by English statesmen as the advance of the Russians themselves against the one country which still lay between them and the Indus. Here was a great fact or series of facts, a danger or series of dangers, with which English statesmanship had to grapple.

There was, as I have said, but one country between Persia and India. But its character and that of its inhabitants seemed likely to make it, with decent management, the very best and most sufficient of barriers against any further hostile advance of the Russians. It was a barren, mountainous, inaccessible region, inhabited by people as wild, as poor, and as savage as the country in which they lived. They were split up into innumerable tribes, each fiercely attached to its independence and to the right of cutting at pleasure its neighbours' throats, but capable, as their history showed, of being united, from time to time, into a loose confederacy by one of those brilliant leaders, half-religious and half-military, such as Islam, even in its apparent decadence, seems capable, at pleasure, of bringing to the front. This loose confederacy generally disappeared with the disappearance of

the genius who had created it; and there were two motives, and only two, which seemed capable of welding the scattered members into a compact union of the whole country—hatred of the foreigner, and fear of a foreign invasion. 'We are content,' so said an old Afghan chief to Mountstuart Elphinstone, 'with discord, we are content with alarms, we are content with blood; but we will never be content with a master.'

There was seated on the throne of Cabul, in the year 1837, Dost Mohammed, a man of genius, and one whose name will often recur in this biography. A usurper he may have been, according to European ideas; but in a country like Afghanistan such a man might fairly claim to be his own ancestry, and, as Eastern notions go, he was a wise and just ruler. Here, then, was the very man for our purpose, all ready to our hands. How did we deal with him?

We accredited an envoy, Alexander Burnes by name, to his Court. He was one of the most adventurous and successful of our Eastern explorers, and he soon discovered that the Afghan sovereign was anxious to form an alliance with us, and to reject all proposals for the counter-alliance which Persian and Russian agents had been pressing upon him. He assured his employers of his belief in the Dost's sincerity and pressed them to accept his proffered friendship as the best security against more serious dangers beyond. But this was too obvious and straightforward a course for men whom a religious Greek would have represented as blinded by the Goddess of Bane, and urged resistlessly onward towards their ruin. The man who was anxious to be our friend must be treated as an enemy. The sovereign chosen by the Afghans must be driven from his throne, and a feeble pretender, whom the Afghans had expelled, and who was living as a pensioner on our bounty, must be put in his place by force of arms. The question of right or wrong seems never to have occurred to the astute diplomatists who elaborated so foolish a policy. And when Alexander Burnes had fallen, the first victim of the policy which he had disapproved, and when our calamities did compel people at home to raise the embarrassing question of right or wrong, the despatches which had long been demanded by an indignant country were, from motives of State policy, published only with important omissions; the result being that Burnes, when he could no longer speak for himself, was represented as having recommended as politic and just a course of action which he had always condemned as impolitic and unjust.

But, meanwhile, Shah Soojah was fished by us out of his retirement; we formed an alliance with him and with the Sikhs, the hereditary enemies of the Afghans; an English army surmounted the dangers of the passes, drove Dost Mohammed, after a brave resistance, into exile, and, with the loss of some 70,000 camels—the life-blood, it should be remembered, of the countries from which they had been collected—succeeded in placing our puppet on the throne. Rewards were distributed by the English authorities with a liberal hand; the successful general, Sir John Keane, hastened home with his success and with a peerage; a large part of our army was recalled to India, and the remainder stayed behind simply to ensure the 'benefits which we had conferred upon a reluctant people!'

It was the story of Regulus in Africa over again. The blind feeling of security at home engendered by successes which had been unexpectedly rapid, was the same in each case. The infatuation of the generals in command was the same. The Roman general wrote back word to Rome that he had 'sealed up the gates of Carthage with terror;' and, as he dictated terms of peace which were intolerable to a prostrate but high-spirited foe, told them roughly that 'men who were good for anything should either conquer or submit to their betters.' The English general boasted that 'Afghanistan was as tranquil as Wales,' at the very moment when he was staying behind to bolster up a ruler whom he knew to be detested by the whole Afghan nation. The fate of the invading armies was much the same. Only, in our case, the ruin was still more sudden, still more terrible, and still more complete; and who will say that it was not still more deserved? The genius of Horace has shed a halo of glory round the last days of Regulus; but it would require more than the genius of Horace to shed a single gleam of light on the last days of Elphinstone or Shelton. It seems to be the fate of an Afghan war that its successes are only less melancholy, if indeed they are less melancholy, than its failures.

Bella geri placuit nullos habitura triumphos.

What followed the recall of our troops may be dismissed with almost equal brevity. At first, everything went 'merry as a marriage bell.' Dost Mohammed, after many romantic adventures in Central Asia, returned at the head of a host of Uzbeks, to measure his sword with us, and, after an engagement in which, by his gallantry, he deserved the success which he obtained, surprised everybody by his

voluntary surrender. But it did not follow, because Dost Mohammed had been deposed and was safe in India, that therefore Shah Soojah sat safely on his throne. The announcement had hardly been made that 'Afghanistan was as tranquil as Wales' when the first dull murmur of the rising torrent was heard. 'You may take Candahar and Ghuzni,' the Khan of Khelat had warned us at the very outset of the war: 'you may even take Cabul, but you cannot conquer the snows; and when they fall, you will be able neither to maintain your army nor to withdraw it.' 'When your military difficulties are over your real difficulties will begin,' was the warning of a greater than the Khan of Khelat, and of one who might have claimed a hearing even from the President of the Board of Control and the Governor-General —the Duke of Wellington. In similar tones of warning had spoken all the most high-minded and the best-informed of our Indian administrators—Lord Wellesley, Mountstuart Elphinstone, Lord William Bentinck, and Sir Charles Metcalfe; in similar tones spoke the Council of the Governor-General, when, at last, they heard the secret which had been carefully kept from them by their chief; in similar tones the Court of Directors at home; but the warning fell upon deaf, because upon unwilling, ears.

The expenses of the occupation were becoming unbearable, and yet everybody felt that it would be dishonourable to leave the puppet whom we had crowned to his certain fate, and Afghanistan to certain anarchy. So we lingered on a little longer and curtailed our expenses, by diminishing the subsidies hitherto paid to the wild tribes who held the gloomy passes which frowned between us and safety. Instantly they returned to their immemorial custom of plundering and slaying all passers by, and, in a moment, we were cut off from India. The river was now running level with its banks and was about to overwhelm us. But still Macnaghten, the Resident at the puppet's court, and still Elphinstone, the general in command of the troops, refused to take warning. The English troops who ought to have been in the citadel were quartered in ill-constructed cantonments, which lay at a distance from the city and were completely commanded by the surrounding mountains. The military stores were in a small fort at a distance from both cantonments and citadel. The royal treasure was in a similar fort in the middle of the city, as though to invite attack; and within the Bala Hissar, or citadel, cowered the miserable monarch, making believe to stand upon his dignity and rule the country, while between him and his only possible protectors, the English army in its

cantonments, seethed and surged the fanatical and infuriated mob of the most turbulent of cities. Worse than this, while in subordinate positions among our officers were some of the most intrepid spirits whom our Indian Empire has produced—Alexander Burnes, Vincent Eyre, William Broadfoot, Colin Mackenzie, George Lawrence, and Eldred Pottinger, any one of whom, had he been in command, might still have saved, or, at all events, would have deserved to save us —the chief authority was vested in General Elphinstone, a brave soldier, but a man wanting in decision, and now incapacitated doubly by old age and by a torturing disease ; while, next to him, came Brigadier-General Shelton, a far abler man, but cross-grained and petulant, utterly impracticable, hardly on speaking terms with his chief, and yet unable to act either with him or without him Everything and everybody, in fact, seemed to be exactly where they ought not to be, and this at the crisis of the fate of some 15,000 men !

Burnes, who was living in his own house in the city without an adequate guard, was the first victim. On November 2, an infuriated mob surrounded his house. He sent for aid to the cantonments. But no aid came, and, after a brave resistance, he was hacked to pieces in his own garden. The stores in the small fort were next attacked, and our troops stood looking on from their cantonments while the fort was stormed, and its contents, the only supplies which could keep them from starvation, were carried off. The arrival of Akbar Khan, the favourite son of Dost Mohammed, infused fresh spirit into the Afghans, while the want of energy and spirit shown by our chiefs spread paralysis among the English troops. Once and again, they refused to obey the word of command, and, once and again, they fled disgracefully from the field when victory seemed to be in their grasp. Starvation now began to stare them in the face. And there was nothing for it but to make the best terms they could for the evacuation of the country with their relentless foe. The game was in the hands of Akbar Khan ; and if the wolf was ever merciful to the lamb, then the Feringhis might hope for forbearance from the infuriated Ghilzais.

In the struggle for life, Macnaghten, while he was negotiating with some of the Sirdars, was induced by the wily Akbar Khan to enter privately into other and inconsistent negotiations with him. It was a trap which was intended to demonstrate to the assembled Sirdars the faithlessness of the English, and it was successful. Macnaghten was lured to a conference, and, in the struggle which ensued, was

shot dead by Akbar Khan. His head was cut off, and his body paraded through the market of Cabul, while some 5,000 soldiers lingered within striking distance, not daring to raise a finger in his defence. There was more delay, more negotiations, more appeals for mercy. 'In friendship,' pleaded the suppliants, 'kindness and consideration are necessary, not overpowering the weak with sufferings.' It had come then to this! A younger generation of Englishmen may need to be reminded that the weak were the English, and that the friendship appealed to was the friendship of the people whose country we had gratuitously invaded, and whose ruler we had deliberately dethroned. In vain, did Eldred Pottinger dwell on the faithlessness of the enemy and on the succours that might yet be hoped for from Jellalabad. In vain, did he passionately appeal to the generals to allow their men to make one effort more to cut their way through the army, and die, if die they must, a soldier's death. The hope of life was stronger than any of his arguments; and, at last, on December 24, the final agreement for the evacuation of the country was signed. All the guns but six, and all the remaining treasure, were to be given up; Dost Mohammed was to be restored; Shah Soojah was to make away with himself whither and how he liked; Nott was to retire from Candahar and Sale from Jellalabad. On these terms the retreating army was to be supplied with provisions and to receive a safe-conduct as far as Jellalabad.

It was several days before the treaty was ratified. Snow—the snow of which the Khan of Khelat had warned us—began to fall; and on January 6, 4,500 fighting-men, and some 12,000 camp-followers, including many women and children, defiled out of the cantonments. As the last of these left the camp—and unfortunately it was not till late in the evening that they did so—the infuriated and triumphant Afghans rushed in and set fire to the abandoned tents, while the retreating army wound slowly on towards the fearful gorge of the Khurd Cabul. The snow lay thick upon the ground; and upon the snow, without food or fuel or shelter of any kind, there bivouacked for two nights in succession, in that pitiless climate, the motley and ill-fated host composed of dusky troops drawn from the sun-scorched plains of India, of Englishmen and Englishwomen and babes at the breast. The camp-followers, who brought up the rear of our army, had been the first to feel the attacks of the pursuing Ghilzais; but when, on the third day, the foremost columns began to enter the fatal defile, they too fell fast and thick beneath the fire of an enemy whom they

could feel and hear, but could not see. Every rock concealed an Afghan marksman, and every one who lagged behind or who dropped exhausted on the road was immediately hacked to pieces by Afghan knives. Agreement after agreement was made with Akbar Khan, who hung like a bird of evil omen on our skirts, and concession after concession was wrung from us. First, the subordinate officers, who might have done most to sustain the shrinking spirits of the men and, perhaps, might have saved them altogether—Lawrence, Mackenzie, and Pottinger—were given up as hostages ; next came the women and children ; and, last of all, those whom we could best spare, the officers in command—Elphinstone and Shelton.

Lured by the scent of human carnage, and drunk with the blood which they had already gorged, the Ghilzai vultures were not likely, in deference to any stipulations made with Akbar Khan, to spare the prey that was in their power ; and Akbar himself, who might, perhaps, have done something to restrain their fury, was already off with his precious burden of English ladies and generals towards the Hindu Kush. The retreat had long since become a rout, and the army a rabble. The scanty supply of food was gone, and now the ammunition began to fail also. The last desperate stand was made at Gundamuck, a name of ill-omen, not wiped out by the treaty which, twenty-seven years later, has been called after it ; and on January 15, there was espied from the ramparts of Jellalabad, riding on a jaded pony, which itself seemed but half alive, a single man, half dead with agony of mind and body, exhausted by want of food, by loss of blood, and by fatigue—the one solitary survivor of the 15,000 men who had left Cabul ten days before. Never, surely, in the whole course of history has wrong-doing been more terribly and more deservedly avenged. The one consolation—if indeed it can now be called a consolation—was that we had learned a lesson which we could never need to be taught again.

The evil genius of Lord Auckland, who retired, broken-down, to England, seemed to rest, for the time, even on the energy and courage of his successor. Lord Ellenborough was a man of great ability, and no mean orator. But his genius was erratic and his despatches were often merely grandiose. He was the victim of his own itching ears ; and his judgment, his candour, and his caution were often sacrificed to the turn of a sentence, or the rhythm of a peroration. He was always in extremes; and after a chivalrous proclamation, in which, by candidly avowing our mistakes and wrong-doings, and

setting forth the principles of our policy for the future, he had evoked a warm response from one end of India to the other, he straightway turned the admiration he had excited into disgust and indignation, by the order, again and again repeated, to Pollock and Nott at once to withdraw from Afghanistan, leaving the prisoners—our brave officers and their helpless wives and children—to their fate! But the passive resistance, and ingenious inability of Nott and Pollock to do what they were bidden, put off the evil day, and, at last, brought them the famous permission to 'retire' from Jellalabad and Candahar, should they think it advisable, 'by way of Cabul!' The permission was greedily seized by the generals; the capital was occupied by the army of vengeance, and, thanks to the generous exertions of our officers, less summary punishment was inflicted on the inhabitants than might have been expected from the excited feelings of our soldiery. The Bala Hissar was blown up; the great bazaar in which Macnaghten's body had been exposed to insult was destroyed, together with the adjacent mosque; the shops of the possibly guilty Afghans, and certainly innocent Hindus, were given up to loot; the prisoners who had been sent off to a living death in Turkestan returned, as by a series of miracles, from the heights of the Hindu Kush, and, literally, dropped into our hands; and, finally, the sandal-wood gates, as they were then believed to be, of Somnath, were brought back in triumph from Ghuzni; while the bewildered natives of India were congratulated by the Governor-General—the Mohammedans on the recapture by Christians of what a Mohammedan conqueror had taken away, and the Hindus on the restoration to a temple which had long ceased even to be remembered, of a trophy which was destined to find a fit resting-place at last, not in the restored temple of Somnath, but in the armoury of the Government fort at Agra! This proclamation was greeted with an outburst of derision both in England and in India: and so, according to approved precedents, the most prolonged tragedy through which the Indian Government had ever passed ended in a tragi-comedy, if not in a downright farce.

On October 1, 1838, Lord Auckland had put forth from Simla the famous State paper which, astounding in the audacity and recklessness of its assertions, had declared his objects in the invasion of Afghanistan; and now, by a coincidence which was anything but undesigned, exactly four years later, on October 1, 1842, Lord Ellenborough, who always aimed at theatrical effects, from the very same

place, and the very same room, wrote a manifesto which declared that

disasters unparalleled in their extent, unless by the errors in which they were originated, and by the treachery by which they were completed, had in one short campaign been avenged upon every scene of past misfortune; that to force a sovereign upon a reluctant people was as inconsistent with the policy as it was with the principles of the British Government, tending to place the armies and resources of that people at the disposal of the first invader, and to impose the burden of supporting a sovereign without the prospect of benefit from his alliance; finally, that the Government of India, content with the limits nature appeared to have assigned to its empire, would henceforward devote all its efforts to the establishment and maintenance of general peace, to the protection of the sovereigns and chiefs its allies, and to the prosperity and happiness of its own faithful subjects; that the rivers of the Punjab and the Indus, and the mountainous passes and the barbarous tribes of Afghanistan would be placed between the British army and an enemy approaching from the West, and no longer between the armies and its supplies.

Meanwhile, on the very day on which Lord Ellenborough wrote his famous proclamation, there started from England, on his return voyage to India, the young Bengal civilian, as yet, little known to fame, who, the very opposite to Lord Ellenborough in all respects, simple as a child in word, in deed, and in thought, was destined to carry out into act, and with the happiest results to all concerned, the wise and noble policy therein foreshadowed. And so, from this long but, as it appears to me, not unnecessary, digression on the first Afghan war, to John Lawrence, the consistent and indomitable opponent of all future Afghan wars, except for purposes of *bonâ-fide* self-defence, I now return.

CHAPTER VII.

MAGISTRATE OF DELHI; AND FIRST SIKH WAR. 1842–1846.

AFTER the usual roughing of the Overland Route and the formation of several shipboard friendships, one of which, unlike most shipboard friendships—that with Seton-Karr—proved lasting, John Lawrence and his wife arrived at Bombay on November 14, 1842. It was a place new to him as to her; and after ten days of sight-seeing in that bustling Babel of races and languages, finding that a war had broken out in Bundelcund, the direct route to the North-West Provinces, they determined to take the much longer and more difficult route through the then little-known Central Provinces to Allahabad. It was a journey adventurous for a man, but doubly adventurous for a woman, whose first experience of India had been a violent attack of cholera, from which, under her husband's careful nursing, she was just recovering. Travelling in India was, at that time, slow work under the best of circumstances; for there were no railways, no public conveyances, few serais, and few roads, or even tracks. But this journey was exceptionally rough and difficult even for India. No sooner had the cool air and delightful scenery of the Ghauts been left behind, than John Lawrence was himself attacked with symptoms of the same terrible disease. 'We were thus,' writes Lady Lawrence, 'about as helpless a pair of travellers in a strange land as could well be found; but we were young and not easily frightened, and, as my husband knew what to do on the first appearance of illness, the alarming symptoms did not increase, and he was soon quite well again.'

At Poona, they stopped, for a few days, in the house of Sir Charles Napier, who was in command there, but happened to be absent on a tour of inspection. From Aurungabad, their next halting-place, to Nagpore, a distance of three hundred miles, their journey lay through a wild country with a very sparse population, and with no facilities at all for travelling. As far as Ellichpore, they went by

dawk, that is, in palanquins with relays of bearers. But here their progress was stopped, for there was no regular dawk, and it was with much difficulty that John Lawrence managed to engage a set of forty bearers to carry them thence to Nagpore. Their plan of travelling was to start between three and four P.M. and push on till late at night, when they stopped near a village, arranged for their food, and made up their beds, of course in their palanquins. After a few hours' sleep they were off again and pressed on till the sun obliged them to stop.

It was seldom during this wild journey that they came even upon a traveller's bungalow. Having only one servant, they had to do almost everything for themselves. The wiry collector, in addition to keeping his forty bearers in order—a task for which his early life at Paniput had well qualified him—had often, himself, to act the part of purveyor and of cook; in other words, he had to find and to cook the lamb, the goat, or the pair of fowls which was to keep them alive; and, as he used to relate, many were the shifts and the turns to which he had recourse to conceal the disagreeable preparations for their rough-and-ready meal from his young and tender-hearted wife.

On the last day of the year they arrived at Nagpore, much to the astonishment of the Englishmen whom they found there. And here more serious troubles came upon John Lawrence, for every one told him that his chance of obtaining employment was very slight. The 'army of vengeance' troops had just returned from Afghanistan, and a brilliant, but, under the circumstances, a very ill-timed and childish pageant had been elaborated by Lord Ellenborough for their reception at Ferozepore, then our chief station on the Sikh frontier, and a place, as the readers of 'Sir Henry Lawrence's Life'[1] know, which was almost the creation of his energy and zeal. There were painted elephants in vast numbers, there were triumphal arches, there was the waving of banners, there was the roar of artillery—altogether a fine show, but, to those who reflected on what had happened, a sorry sight. One ingredient of the pageant was happily conspicuous by its absence. It had been intended by Lord Ellenborough, in the very worst spirit of Roman pride, that the captive monarch whom we had driven from his throne, and were now driven to replace upon it, should grace with his presence the triumphal procession. But better counsels prevailed, and he and we were spared this crowning humiliation.

There was no one in India who did not rejoice that we were quit

[1] Vol. i. p. 206.

of Afghanistan—the scene of our success and of our shame—on almost any terms. A feeling of mixed excitement and depression pervaded the country. There was plenty to be done, but there were too many hands to do it. Every one seemed to be out of work, and John Lawrence wrote, in some anxiety, from Nagpore, to report his arrival to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces. He wrote privately, at the same time, to his immediate superior and friend, Robert Hamilton, Commissioner of Agra, begging him to press his claims for an appointment. Meanwhile, he pushed on to Allahabad, where he was hospitably entertained by Frederick Currie, who was, in after years, to be brought into such close contact with him in high official posts. Here he bought his first pair of horses. It was a characteristic purchase enough; for he used often to tell, with something, perhaps, of shame, but more of amusement or of pride, how, as I have related already, in earlier days at Paniput, he had been so taken by the beauty of a splendid Arab that he had spent his last penny in buying him. It was on Chanda's back that, for many years afterwards, he had done some of the very best of his work: his 'cutcherry on horseback;' his pursuit of great criminals; his morning and evening canters, varied sometimes by the healthful and exciting chase, albeit he was all alone, of the hyena or the wolf or the wild boar.

At Cawnpore, he spent a month in the house of Richard, the youngest of the Lawrence brotherhood, who was just then employed in raising troops there. It was a pleasant breathing-space before the more public and responsible portion of his life began. But, anxious about the future, and eager to be at work again, he chafed at the want of employment. He had already purchased what was, in his eyes, the first necessity of life—a pair of horses—and now he furnished himself with what was only less necessary—a second pair!—and then, after buying a buggy, a stock of tents, and stores of various kinds, and engaging servants for the future housekeeping, he started forth again, like the patriarch of old, with his long caravan of followers, not knowing which way he was to go, or where he should find rest, or work.

It was his wife's first experience of camp life, and very enjoyable she found it. The usual plan was to send the tents in advance some ten or twelve miles, and then to drive that distance in the buggy, arriving in time for breakfast; and then they would spend the heat of the day in reading, writing, and conversation. At Agra, their tents were pitched just outside the gardens of the Taj Mehal, so that they had every opportunity of observing that matchless building—'the

delight and the despair of the architects of the world, in the early morning, in the full blaze of the midday sun, and by the softer light of the moon. This visit was especially recalled to the mind of one at least of the party when, more than twenty years afterwards, they were there, once again, in all the pomp and splendour of the Vice-regal court. 'Great as was then,' writes Lady Lawrence, 'my joy and thankful pride in my husband, it could not be greater than the delight of those early days, when the world seemed all before us, and the reality of life had yet hardly touched me, and I lived only in the present happiness.' On one of their easy marches thence a striking domestic incident occurred. John Lawrence and his wife were driving, one day, towards their tents, when they saw a large encampment near the road, from which, to their indescribable surprise and delight, emerged their brother George, who had just returned from his long captivity in Afghanistan, and was still dressed as an Afghan. What a family meeting! and what an outpouring of hearts there must have been! The incidents of the victorious advance to Cabul, and the disastrous retreat from it; the captivity, the chivalrous self-sacrifice, and the escape, as from a living death, of the elder; the hopes deferred, the news from the distant home, always welcome in a foreign land, but, perhaps, never so welcome as now, brought direct from England by the younger brother! What thrilling stories George Lawrence must have had to tell during the one day that he was able to march with John, those who have read his account of 'Forty Years in India,' know well. But, perhaps, no story was so thrilling as one which is not, I think, contained in it, and which, just as I heard it from his own lips, may find a place here.

One day, while George Lawrence, Eldred Pottinger, and the other captives were sitting together at one end of the room in which they were confined, Akbar Khan—the man who had slain Macnaghten with his own hand, and had made the treacherous compacts with our demoralised troops—came in, with other leading Sirdars, and proceeded to hold high and animated debate at the other end of the room. Pottinger, the only one of the hostages who understood Pushtu, moved towards them and listened attentively. At last he rejoined his own party and said to George Lawrence, 'Do you know what they are discussing?' 'No,' replied Lawrence. 'Well,' said Pottinger quietly, 'only whether it is better for their own interests to kill us here and now, or to keep us alive: at present the majority are for killing us.' 'You had better go back,' replied Lawrence with equal

self-command: 'see how the debate goes, and then come and let us know. Pottinger did so, and when the 'great consult' was over, he returned, saying: 'The majority are now the other way, and we are not to be killed at present.' After this, the prisoners were well treated, but it was not the first time that their lives had been in imminent danger. It had been seriously proposed on a previous occasion that each Sirdar should kill one captive with his own hands, thus placing all alike beyond the pale of British forgiveness; and it was owing, probably, not so much to the clemency, as to the enlightened self-interest of Akbar Khan that their lives had, on each occasion, been spared.

On parting with his brother, George asked him casually whither he was going. 'To Meerut, replied John. 'Why are you going to a place where you are not known?' rejoined his brother. 'Go to Delhi, where you are known: you are sure to get work there.' The advice was taken, and while he was on his way thither he heard, to his delight, that, on the Commissioner of Agra's recommendation, he had been appointed to the post of Civil and Sessions Judge at Delhi, though only for the period of one month. Thus John Lawrence found himself beginning work, once more, at the scene of his earliest Indian labours. And it is not to be wondered at, looking at the important influence which this return on his own footsteps had on the whole of his subsequent career, and considering also what a career it was, that I have found that more than one person has been anxious to claim a share of the credit of sending him back there. In any case, years afterwards John Lawrence wrote to Hamilton: 'Your sending me to Delhi in 1843 was the making of me, and I can never forget it.' And those cynical people who are ready to think that gratitude may be best defined as 'a lively anticipation of favours to come' may be interested to know that such, at all events, was not John Lawrence's gratitude; for, years afterwards again, when the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab had returned to England, and had become a member of the Indian Council, he wrote to Sir Robert Hamilton in warm recollection of this long bygone service, and offered him his first nomination for his son. 'It is a great trait in his character,' says Sir Robert; and few will deny that it was so.

There were no more easy marches now. John Lawrence and his wife hurried on to Delhi, and, during their month's stay there, were hospitably entertained by Thomas Metcalfe, the Commissioner, brother-in-law to George Lawrence, and an old friend of John, who,

eight years before, had assisted him in bringing to justice the murderers of William Fraser, his predecessor in his high office. John Lawrence was delighted to be at work again in the place which he knew and loved so well; and, by the end of the month, he received another acting appointment in the Delhi district, not far from the scene of his old labours at Paniput. His headquarters were to be at Kurnal, which he had known before only as a large military cantonment; and the prospect of settling down quietly, even for the short period of six months, was pleasant enough.

But this was not to be just yet, for disturbances had broken out in the neighbouring state of Khytul. Its Raja having died without an heir, the English Government found it convenient to declare that the territory had lapsed to them. But the retainers of the palace, thinking, as well they might, that they had at least as good a right to the palace spoils as the English, stimulated the native troops to resist the transfer, and attacked and overpowered the small force which was sent to take it over. The ungrateful duty of suppressing this disturbance fell upon Henry Lawrence, who after his exhausting labours, under Mackeson, at Peshawur in pushing on supplies for Pollock's army of retribution, had recently come back to civil work at Umballa. He was opposed, on principle, to the annexation of native states. The work therefore was little to his liking, but he had no choice in the matter. He hurried over to Kurnal for reinforcements, which were supplied by his brother John in conjunction with the military authorities, and John, delighted to see his brother, and perhaps also —like David, as Eliab thought—still more delighted to see a little fighting, accompanied the force to the scene of action. The resistance of the enemy was trifling enough, but it was a work of more difficulty to keep order among the British troops, some of whom actually plundered the treasures which they had been sent to guard.

But I am fortunately able to describe the scene in the graphic words of an eye-witness, my friend, Colonel Henry Yule.

The family of the Khytul Raja had refused to give up the place to the native force sent to receive it. My friend and chief, Sir William Baker, then Captain and Superintendent of Canals, was ordered out to give engineering help if needed, and I with him. We met the troops retiring discomfited with some loss. So we had to wait till a considerable force assembled and advanced to Khytul. The fort was found abandoned, and a strange scene of confusion—all the paraphernalia and accumulations of odds and ends of a wealthy native family lying about and inviting loot.

I remember one beautiful crutch-stick of ebony with two rams' heads in jade. I took it and sent it in to the political authority, intending to buy it when sold. There was a sale, but my crutch never appeared! Somebody had a more developed taste in jade. I remember an Irish officer, rummaging a box, found a book in some native language, with a title-page in English that he could read—after his fashion—for he called out to me, 'It's the Epistel *to* Powle. I read it on the frontispiece!' On this occasion I first saw four distinguished men—Sir George Clerk, Henry Lawrence, R. Napier, and John Lawrence. With the first three I made acquaintance, the last I only saw. But he must have, even then, been a man of mark in some way, from the way he was pointed out to me.

Amid the general rummage that was going on, an officer of British infantry had been put over a part of the palace supposed to contain treasure, and they—officer and all—were helping themselves. Henry Lawrence was one of the Politicals under (Sir) George Clerk. When the news of this affair came to him I was present. It was in a white marble loggia in the palace, where there was a white marble chair, or throne, on a basement. Lawrence was sitting on this throne in great excitement. He wore an Afghan *chóga*, a sort of dressing-gown garment, and this, and his thin locks and thin goat's beard, were streaming in the wind. He always dwells in my memory as a sort of pythoness on her tripod under the afflatus!

It need hardly be added that Henry Lawrence took good care to bring the offenders to justice, and then, with all the energy of his nature, he set to work to reorganise the administration and settle the revenue of the little state. John Lawrence, meanwhile, returned to Kurnal, and here a domestic event of importance occurred, for on June 10, 1843, at the very hottest season, his eldest child, Kate, was born. John's office was in his own house, a privilege rare enough in Indian official life; and his only complaint was that, owing to the epidemic which was raging in the surrounding district, he could get nobody to do any work.

In October, when the court of the Governor-General broke up from Simla, and began to move towards Calcutta, John Lawrence's house, being the only inhabited one in the cantonment, was the halting-place of many high officials, with a sprinkling of old friends among them; and on November 6, his brother Henry and his wife arrived on their way to Nepal. Here was another happy family meeting. It was the first time that the wives had met since they had played together as young girls in the north of Ireland, and each had now the satisfaction of judging for herself of the choice the other had made and of

witnessing the help, the sympathy, and the happiness which each gave and received in so abundant a measure. They passed some days together in the one inhabited house, 'surrounded,' says Mrs. Henry Lawrence, 'by long lines of barracks, hospitals, and stables, flagstaff, racquet-court, church, bungalows, gardens, out-offices, all empty, all looking as if a plague had devastated the station in a night.' [1]

A plague had devastated the station, not in a night, but in a year, or rather series of years. Kurnal, when John Lawrence had last known it, had been one of the largest, healthiest, and most popular of the cantonments in India. Its local advantages were great for such a purpose; for the country was open and suitable for the evolutions of troops; the soil was light and sandy, and therefore conducive to health; there was plenty of grass and water; lastly, the two great roads from Delhi and Meerut converged there, and, standing as the place did on the direct highway between the Punjab and Hindustan, it had been, as I have already pointed out, the historic battle-field of India. What then had turned it into such a city of the dead? It was not that the general condition of the people had deteriorated. On the contrary, there were signs of improvement everywhere. In 1833-35, when John Lawrence had been stationed there before, what between the oppressive assessments of previous years and the famine, the people had been at their lowest ebb, and many villages had been completely broken up. But he had not left till he had seen, and had, in great measure, caused, the turn of the tide. He had brought order out of anarchy, had postponed the payment of the land-tax, and had set on foot its permanent reduction, a work which others had, afterwards, been able satisfactorily to complete. What then was the cause of the epidemic and of the distress which it had brought in its train? Fretting at the want of work, and finding that some fifty per cent. of the troops were struck down by fever, and that the rest were so enfeebled that 'there was not a man of them who could carry his arms or march a stage,' while the natives in the adjoining villages were suffering equally, he spent his spare time in an elaborate inquiry into the cause of the epidemic and its possible remedies. The results he embodied in a valuable paper, the first of the kind in my possession, which he put together at Delhi in the following spring.

The epidemic he traced, not, as so many high authorities have since done, to canal irrigation in itself, thus, rightly or wrongly, dis-

[1] *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 442.

couraging the chief safeguard against famine, and the cheapest means of intercommunication, but rather to the neglect of proper precautions in carrying out that irrigation, to the masses of herbage and brushwood which had been allowed to grow on the canal banks, and to the increased cultivation of rice. The inhabitants of that part of India, it should be remembered, unlike the natives of Bengal, had, till lately, been accustomed to live, not on rice, but on wheat, barley, and pulses of various kinds. These last crops need comparatively little water, whereas rice, to do well, needs to be incessantly flooded. 'Rice, in fact, grows only in a marsh, and in the last few years it had come to be cultivated literally up to the bungalows.' The cantonment was quite surrounded on two sides by rice-fields. Here was one fertile source of mischief, and the neglect, on the part of the military authorities, which allowed this had also allowed vast masses of refuse to accumulate. 'The only scavengers were the kites and vultures, the pariah dogs and pigs.' The bodies of animals and even of men might be seen lying about where they had died, without even a handful of earth thrown over them, nuisances which John Lawrence used to ferret out for himself in his early rides, and order his own police to remove. The practical remedies which he suggested for this state of things were the absolute prohibition of rice cultivation within four miles of the cantonments, the regulation of the height of the water in the canals, and the careful removal of herbage from their banks, so that no slimy ground or putrid vegetation might be exposed to the burning rays of the sun ; an improved system of drainage ; a strict system of sanitary police ; the removal of the bazaars to a distance from all barracks, bungalows, and hospitals, and their reconstruction with wide wind-swept passages or streets.

All this may seem obvious enough now, but it was not so obvious then. It was characteristic of the man, and is historically interesting as showing the strong bent of his mind, thus early, towards that sanitary reform and that peaceful progress which were the chief aim and the chief triumph—not gunpowder and not glory—of his rule as Viceroy. He did not save the Kurnal cantonment from condemnation by his suggested reforms. It was condemned already. But the epidemic there, and the stimulus it gave him, did something towards enabling him to save many lives thereafter throughout India ; just as his bitter experience, in early life, of red-tape at Paniput, and of the famine-stricken poverty of the masses at Gurgaon and Etawa, did much to determine the strong conviction on which he ever afterwards

acted, that tools ought always to go to those who could best handle them, and that the first duty of an Indian ruler was not the extension of the empire nor the pampering of the rich few, but the care of the poverty-stricken millions.

Two other kindred subjects appear to have attracted John Lawrence's attention and to have especially touched his heart during his residence at Kurnal—the 'purveyance system' and the condition of the native women. By the purveyance system I mean the system which obliged the villagers who lay along the route of great personages, like the Governor-General or the Commander-in-Chief, not only to furnish carts and beasts of burden for the use of their gigantic camps, but often to provide them at great loss, with no remuneration at all. The Governor-General had just then, fortunately or unfortunately, discovered that it was always necessary to go to the hills in the hot season, and his huge following must be supported somehow. If the native police were employed to collect the carts and animals, they took to plundering the natives themselves; if they were not employed, no carts or animals were forthcoming. When, as often happened, the animals were called for during ploughing or harvest time, it is clear that no ordinary rate of hire would be an adequate remuneration, and, very often, even this was wanting or fell into the wrong hands. The odium of this, and of other abuses connected with the system, of course fell on the Government; and rightly enough, argued John Lawrence, 'in so far as we do not make our servants behave better. Natives in office are particularly bad; sepoys, policemen, officers of the revenue, all seem to think it part of their perquisites to take everything for nothing.' He then goes on to suggest remedies which it is unnecessary to particularise, as they have long since been applied.

The condition of the native women touched him even more keenly. Men thought nothing of selling their wives or those of their deceased brothers, or forcing them to live with themselves. At the best, women were mere drudges, hard worked and ill treated, and suicide was very common among them. In Gurgaon, in 1835, John Lawrence had ascertained that upwards of five hundred women had been found drowned in wells, and though accident would account for some of these, the wells in that country being left in a very exposed and dangerous condition, yet it was certain, he thought, that the greater number had committed suicide, or had fallen in by foul means. The monotony of his hours spent in cutcherry was, some-

times, relieved by cases which, tragical in themselves, yet wore a semi-comic aspect. One day a man lodged a complaint against a friend for having carried off his wife and sold her to another man for thirty-six rupees! John Lawrence at first disbelieved the story, but it turned out to be true. The culprit had taken advantage of the absence of the husband and the illness of the wife to put her in a dhoolie and carry her off. The third man acknowledged the purchase, and said the woman had lived with him contentedly as his wife! The guilty parties were sentenced to six months in gaol, and the husband and wife went away quite satisfied, 'neither of them appearing to think that they were any the worse for what had happened.

A much more pathetic story, and one calculated to stir the deepest feelings of the human heart, had come before John Lawrence in cutcherry, during his previous residence in this same district, and may be fitly inserted here. It shall be told in his own language, for it would be difficult to improve upon it.

The Leper.

Of all diseases that afflict humanity, the leprosy has always appeared to me the most loathsome and hideous. In no disease is the condition of the sufferer more helpless, and yet there is none in which assistance and consolation are so difficult to obtain. So malignant is the disorder, so infectious is its nature, that every one flies from the leper. To touch his skin, nay, even his very clothes, to inhale the same atmosphere, is said to be contagious. Though the effects are so fatal and so certain, its progress is usually slow and insidious. From the first slight speck on the hand or lip, until it spreads over the whole body, years may elapse, and during this period the health of the person does not seem to suffer. He pursues his daily occupations, and though no one will actually touch him or allow him to eat out of the same dish with him, men do not consider it dangerous to associate with him. I recollect a native officer of a cavalry contingent, a good soldier, and a respectable man, who did his duty for many years under this affliction; and I have often seen the men of his troop lounging on the same cushions with him. As the disease, however, spreads, the leper is gradually shunned. Friends, kinsmen, and relatives, all forsake him. The mother who has nursed him, the wife of his bosom, all fly the leper. A hut is built for him far from the haunts of his fellow-men, and daily his food is placed on a distant stone, to which on the departure of the ministering hand, he may drag his weary body.

These thoughts have been suggested by an extraordinary and horrible incident which happened some years ago in the district where I was

magistrate. I was sitting in court, busily engaged in my duty, when a villager in the crowd called out that he had a petition of much importance to present, and prayed that I would listen to it at once. 'I would not put it into the petition box,' said he, 'as I was anxious to give it to you with my own hand.' As I assented to his request, he came up and laid his petition on the table. The complaint was from a leper, a relation of the man before me. It ran thus :—

'Hail, cherisher of the afflicted !

'Be it known to your enlightened mind that your devoted servant has been a leper for many years. My limbs have fallen off piece by piece ; my whole body has become a mass of corruption. I am weary of life ; I wish to die. My life is a plague and disgust to the whole village, and my death is earnestly longed for. It is well known to all that for a leper to consent to die, to permit himself to be buried alive, is approved of by the gods, who will never afflict another individual of his village with a similar malady. I therefore solicit your permission to be buried alive. The whole village wishes it, and I am happy and content to die. You are the ruler of the land and without your leave it would be criminal. Hoping that I may obtain my prayer, I pray that the sun of prosperity may ever shine on you.

(Signed) RAM BUKSH, Leper.'

It certainly takes much to move me, but I confess to have been fairly astounded on hearing this petition. I have seen curious things in my day, and have heard extraordinary requests preferred, but this exceeded anything of the kind. 'Who are you ? What is your name ? Are you a relation of the leper ? Is he mad ? He certainly cannot be in his right mind.' After receiving answers to these and similar inquiries, I asked, 'Where is the man ?' The villager replied, 'He is outside the house. We have had him carried here on a dhoolie—a kind of cot carried on men's shoulders—if you will come outside you can speak to him and satisfy yourself that what I have stated is true.' I rose up and followed the man. There was a dhoolie placed under a tree in the shade, and, at a little distance, stood a group of villagers. 'There he is, and there are his father and brothers with some of the headmen of our village,' said my guide, pointing to them. I immediately entered into conversation with them, and they all confirmed the first speaker's statement. The wretched man himself, who appeared to be in an advanced stage of the disease, was a most hideous spectacle. His arms were gone from the elbows downwards, and his legs downwards from his knees, and his whole body was a mass of corruption. 'O Sahib !' he cried, 'for God's sake listen to my petition ; let me be buried alive. I have lived too long ; let me die !' 'My poor fellow,' I replied, 'it is not in my power to comply with your request ; 'tis a sad business, but it would be unlawful ; it would be murder ;

it cannot be allowed.' As the man began to wail and scream I ordered him to be carried away, after charging his relations to take every care of him.

After the court was over, being in conversation with an intelligent native, who had been present during the day, and had witnessed the scene, he asked me why I had refused the leper's petition. 'He must die soon; he is in great misery; it would have benefited both him and his village,' remarked the man. 'What,' said I, 'do you really believe that no one of the community will again be a leper?' 'Yes,' replied he, 'and so does the whole country.' 'Well,' I remarked, 'there is no reasoning on points of belief, but to me it appears ridiculous. At any rate, under the Company's rule such an act would be criminal. I have no power to grant the permission, even were I willing.' 'It is all very true what the hazoor has observed; but you will find that the village will bury him alive without leave,' replied the native, as he made his salaam and retired.

Thinking such a thing to be out of the question, I dismissed the matter from my mind. But, a few days afterwards, I received a report from the police officer of an out-station to the effect that, hearing that a man had been buried alive, he had visited the spot, and, to ascertain the fact, had dug up the body, which proved to be that of the leper. On the parties being arrested, it appeared that they were the same individuals who had solicited permission from me in the manner I have described. In the investigation which ensued, I found that on their return from the unsuccessful application to me, they had held a consultation of the whole village, when it was determined that the leper should be buried. This, accordingly, was done in the open day, with all due solemnity, the whole population attending. The headmen of the village, the watchmen, and other local functionaries, were committed to take their trial at the sessions, where they all pleaded guilty, and were condemned to imprisonment. Punishment was no doubt necessary, though I am happy to say it was lenient. I think the maximum was not more than six months' confinement in the district jail. I could not but think that they were more to be pitied than blamed, and that, however revolting to our feelings was the manner of putting the unfortunate creature to death, in his own words 'he had lived too long.'

Delhi: March 7, 1845.

The man who could listen to such a tale as this unmoved, or who could pass many years in a position of authority amidst a people so quick-witted and yet so credulous, so impoverished and yet so uncomplaining, so tractable and yet so tenacious of their narrow rights, so long and so often overrun by foreign conquerors, and yet so unalterably attached to their ancestral manners and creeds, and then

fail to feel towards them somewhat as a father feels to a wayward but a helpless and a trustful child, is hardly to be found, and, if found, he would be little to be envied. Englishmen there have been and still are in India, who, priding themselves on their race or their colour, their superior strength of body or strength of will, despise the natives, keep aloof from them, call them by the opprobrious name of 'nigger,' and strike or maltreat them in a way in which they would not venture to treat a European. But such Englishmen have happily always been in a comparatively small minority. They may be found sometimes among passing visitors to India, among the youngest and most empty-headed officers of the army, or among the frivolous and fashionable and scandal-loving society of the great towns. But they are not to be found in the ranks of the civil service, or amongst those soldier statesmen who have built up and have preserved our Indian Empire. It is not in the writings, the conversation, or the acts of men like Sir Thomas Munro or Lord Metcalfe, like Outram or Havelock, like Henry or John Lawrence, and of the hundreds of good men and true of whom these are but the most brilliant representatives, that we can find a word or a deed indicative of other than the deepest and most affectionate interest in the helpless and voiceless millions over whom they rule. John Lawrence never weighed his words too carefully. If he thought a man a knave or a fool, he generally called him so to his face. If he had to strike at all, he struck a knock-down blow. Yet, in the thousands of his letters written off on the spur of the moment, that I have read, I have not come upon a single expression which would wound the pride of the most sensitive of natives; nor does he, in one single instance, use the opprobrious term which is the very first to come to the mouth of too many young officers, or casual visitors in India. These are the men who know the natives, who sympathise with them, and have learned to love them; who, in the spirit of a truly imperial race, look upon themselves as the servants of those whom they rule, and rule by serving them; who do everything that in them lies to bridge over the yawning gulf which, by our fate or by our fault, still separates colour from colour, race from race, and creed from creed. Till that gulf can be, in some measure, bridged over, whatever our good intentions, and whatever the benefits of our rule—and they are neither few nor small—we still, disguise it as we may, hold India by the sword; and so long as we hold it by the sword alone, we hold it by the least satisfactory and the most precarious of tenures.

In November, 1843, the 'acting' appointment at Kurnal came to an end, and John Lawrence travelled back, bag and baggage, over the well-known ground, to take up another temporary appointment at Delhi. It was not till towards the end of the following year that the 'substantive' post became vacant, and then, at last, the right man was found in the right place, and John Lawrence became, in his own right, Magistrate and Collector of the two districts of Delhi and Paniput. During these last two years, his salary had been less than half of that which he had received before he left India on furlough; and it must have been difficult enough for a man who was so hospitable and so liberal, to maintain his wife, his child, his servants, and his two pairs of horses on so narrow an income. He had now just attained, in rank and emoluments, to the position he had held before he left India, invalided; and in the general depression which prevailed in India as the result of the Afghan war, and that other war which followed, and, if possible, outstripped it in iniquity—the war with the Ameers of Scinde—his contemporaries found themselves in much the same deadlock as he did. In November, 1844, a second daughter, Emily, was born, just at the time when her father's means became more adequate to his needs and his deserts.

Of the work done by him during the next two years as Magistrate and Collector of Delhi there is, unfortunately, little to tell; though, to judge by what I have been told was, in after years, his usual exordium in telling a story—'when I was Collector at Delhi'—there must have been not a little that would have been well worth the telling, if only it had been preserved. But from what I have been able to record of his work during his earlier sojourn there, we may, doubtless, infer the general character of the later. There were the same general elements of turbulence, disaffection, and difficulty: the corrupt palace of the effete Mogul, who was now some ten years nearer to his total dissolution; the swashbucklers who infested his court; the large criminal class and the mongrel multitude of the historic capital. Sir Robert Montgomery recollects the reputation which John Lawrence acquired, and which reached even to Allahabad, by the masterly manœuvring of a small body of police with whom he descended on a nest of gamblers and cutthroats, 'budmashes' of every description, and took them all prisoners, without shedding a drop of blood, and without creating even so much as a disturbance.

'One illustration of the love of fun which lay deep within him, and doubtless flashed out continually during this earlier and less conventional period of his life, has, happily, been preserved; for he used to tell how the officer in command at Delhi, one day, sent him a letter in which not one word was legible. John Lawrence, after puzzling briefly over it, returned a reply, 'My dear Colonel'—followed by a few lines of unmeaning scribble, and duly signed. Shortly afterwards, the Colonel came over to the Collector in high wrath to demand explanations. The Collector met him by presenting his own letter, which its writer could not read.[1]

During the spring months of 1845, John Lawrence found time, with the help of his ever-faithful amanuensis and companion, to write down the graphic stories of his earlier life in India, of which I have reproduced so many; and, in November of the same year, came one of the turning-points in his life. Up to this time, he had owed nothing to the favour or attention of the great. He had helped fortune far more than fortune had helped him. He had passed through all the grades of the Civil Service, perhaps at a slower, certainly not at a faster, rate than the average civilian. Any special amount of experience he had acquired was of his own seeking, and at the cost of enormous labour. His fame, so far as it had yet spread, was the result of what he had done, and of nothing else. Unlike Sir Charles Metcalfe, with whom, in view of the high elevation which each ultimately attained, it is most natural to compare him, and who was taken under the wing of Lord Wellesley from the moment of his arrival, and was pushed rapidly on from one appointment to another, John Lawrence owed nothing to the patronage of Government House. His life in India had covered the greater portion of the careers of three Governors-General—Lord William Bentinck, Lord Auckland, and Lord Ellenborough—and there is nothing to show that any one of these did so much as know him even by name. But more stormy times were now coming on, and, by a happy accident, he was brought into contact with the new Governor-General, at the outset of his Indian career.

Lord Ellenborough, with the glory or the shame of the annexation of Scinde indelibly attaching to him, had been recalled, in the mid-career of his contumacious eccentricities, by the masters whom he had throughout resolved to treat as though they were his servants.

[1] See *Quarterly Review* for April 1883, Article on 'Lord Lawrence,' p. 302.

The laconic and world-famous despatch, 'Peccavi, I have Scinde,' fathered by 'Punch' upon the splendid and self-willed soldier, was the confession of a grim truth, the whole responsibility for which his proud humility would have been quite content to bear. But this, unfortunately, could not be. It had to be borne by the nation at large, and the annexation of Scinde remains, and will always remain, one of the deepest blots on our national escutcheon. An act condemned not only by such chivalrous soldiers as Sir James Outram, and such high civil authorities as Sir Henry Pottinger and Captain Eastwick, who had been for years upon the spot, and who knew the circumstances best, but unanimously disapproved of, as Mr. Gladstone has recently told us, by a Cabinet which contained men of such varied ability and such vast knowledge as Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington, as Lord Derby and Sir Henry Hardinge, and Mr. Gladstone himself, when once it was done, could not, it was thought, well be undone. To have undone it, would have involved—so the Government, looking at their imperial responsibilities, determined—a wrong the more; and so they were obliged to condone, and to hand down to posterity, that most terrible of possessions—a heritage of triumphant wrong. Truly, the provincial rulers who use the power which is, of necessity, entrusted to them in an empire with such vast and such widely scattered dependencies as England, to involve it in an unjust war, or an uncalled-for annexation—who thus force the hand and conscience of the nation beforehand, and bind up with its history, for all time, the consciousness of injustice,—incur the most fearful of responsibilities. It may be necessary to entrust them with the power, and it may, sometimes, also be necessary to call it into action; but, if they misuse it, they should feel that they do so, like the proposers of a new law in the conservative Greek colony of old, with a rope around their necks.

The state of the regions beyond the Sutlej, seething with a brave and turbulent soldiery, who, for some years past—ever since, in fact, the strong hand of Runjeet Sing, the lion of the Punjab, had been withdrawn—had set their own government at defiance, and might, it was believed, at any moment burst upon British India, seemed to call for the best soldier at our command to succeed Lord Ellenborough. He was found in the person of the veteran, who, as a subaltern, had received four wounds, had had four horses shot under him, and had won nine medals in the Peninsula; who, as a Lieutenant-Colonel, had turned the tide in the battle of Albuera—itself the turning-point

of the Peninsular War; had, afterwards, bled at Ligny, and was the special favourite of both Blucher and Wellington—the high-souled and chivalrous Sir Henry Hardinge. He had been enjoined, with more than usual solemnity, by the Court of Directors, to keep the peace, if peace were possible, and, with probably more than the usual sincerity of newly appointed Governors-General, he had pledged himself to do so. 'A purer man,' so Mr. Gladstone, the last surviving and the most brilliant member of the Cabinet in which he served, has recently remarked, 'a more honourable man, and, great soldier as he was, a man less capable of being dazzled by military glory, never entered the councils of his sovereign.' But events were too strong for him. He found that the preparations which had been made for the defence of the frontier by his battle-loving predecessor were inadequate to the daily increasing danger; and with consummate skill, still hoping for peace but preparing for war, he managed, quite unobserved by the Indian public, within little more than a year after he had reached the country, to double the number of our troops on the threatened positions.

So true a soldier would not be content without a personal inspection of the frontier line. His road lay through Delhi, and on November 11, 1845, he met, for the first time, its Collector and Magistrate—the subject of this biography. A soldier born and bred, he was not likely to know much of civil matters; but he was able, as the result showed, to appreciate, almost at a glance, the capacities, military and civil, latent and developed, of John Lawrence. Each, at first sight, was favourably impressed with the other—the Governor-General with the energy, the sagacity, and the knowledge of the Magistrate, who accompanied him in his rides over the ruined cities which surrounded the city of the living, and endeavoured to explain to him all the mysteries of irrigation and of revenue collection; the Magistrate with the frankness and friendliness and military spirit of the Governor-General. 'I went out,' writes John to his brother Henry, in one of the earliest of his letters which has come into my hands, 'on the 11th to meet the Governor-General. He came in yesterday. I like him much; he is amiable and considerate, but does not give me any idea of being a man of ability. Currie and Benson are the only men of standing about him: the rest are mere logs. Everything breathes a pacific air; I do not think there will be a war. He leaves here on the 19th, and goes straight to Umballa.

He does not seem to me to be much at home on civil matters, or to interest himself on such subjects, but he is wide awake in all military affairs.'

In another letter, written a few days later, November 27, a little light is thrown on his own doings. 'The troops from Meerut have been called off in a great hurry, I believe by Broadfoot. Cope is full of warlike ideas, but I believe it is a false alarm. Certainly the Governor-General knew nothing of the matter, for some of his own aides-de-camp were here amusing themselves at the races. . . . I have hardly a moment to myself, for my assistants are all gone, and my joint magistrate, poor fellow, who only married a few months since, is at the point of death. I will send you Alison. You will find him a pleasant writer, but very one-sided; and though always speaking *ex cathedrâ*, as it were, not always as right as he thinks.' It is not difficult to imagine the interest with which John Lawrence, with his fondness for military history, when looking forward to the arrival of Sir Henry Hardinge, would have turned to the account given by Alison—whom he so well characterises—of the field of Albuera, and would have found there the young Lieutenant-Colonel, who had now risen to be Governor-General, justly described as the 'young soldier with the eye of a general and the soul of a hero.'

One or two comments are naturally suggested by the letters I have quoted. First, it should be remembered that the impressions formed as to the want of ability of the Governor-General were first impressions only, dashed off hurriedly, according to John Lawrence's manner, and that they were afterwards considerably modified. Indeed, his subsequent estimate of the Governor-General came nearer to the very high one formed, from the most intimate knowledge, by his brother Henry, and published, since his death, in his collected essays.

Secondly, Sir Henry Hardinge was fully conscious of his own ignorance 'of civil matters,' and, being conscious of it, wisely forebore to meddle with them. Before leaving England he had sought the advice, as any wise Governor-General would do—and it would be well if all succeeding Governors-General had done the like—of the man who, of all men then living, knew most of India. The leading bit of advice then given him by Mountstuart Elphinstone was 'not to meddle with civil details;' and, acting on this advice, when he landed in Calcutta, he sent for the Government Secretaries, bade them give him the best advice they could in writing, and warned them

that, if they tried to avail themselves of his ignorance in such matters, it would be the worse for them sooner or later.[1]

Thirdly, 'Everything seems pacific; I do not think there will be a war.' This reads oddly enough, when we remember that it was on the very day (November 17) on which it was written that the Durbar at Lahore determined to invade British India; that it was nothing but the scruples of the astrologers, who said that the stars were not favourable, which delayed operations for a single day; that, on the 11th of the following month, the Sikh army began to cross the Sutlej, and that, by the 15th, the whole strength of the famous Khalsa commonwealth—60,000 soldiers, 40,000 camp-followers, and 150 heavy guns—were safely landed in British territory. We may well ask, How could John Lawrence himself, how could the Governor-General, how could the Commander-in-Chief, and the most experienced officers on the frontier—Littler, Broadfoot, Wheeler, and others—all agree that no immediate danger was to be apprehended? They thought, indeed, that bands of Akalis—fanatics, akin to the Muslim Ghazis—might rush on their deaths by haphazard incursions. But not one of them feared the deliberate and immediate invasion of an army. The fact is, that the Sikh Durbar had given secret orders for the invasion, not so much with any hope of conquering British India, as of securing their own safety. They had reason to fear that their tumultuary army, the Prætorian Guard of Lahore, would turn and rend them. Would it not be well to give it vent elsewhere? If the Sikh army were destroyed in the invasion of India, the Sirdars might still hope for consideration from the British. If it were successful, they would step quietly in for a share of the spoil. Such reckless and cruel policy it would have been difficult for any one outside the Durbar itself to have predicted. 'No one can tell,' as John Lawrence pertinently remarks in one of his letters, 'what fools will do.' But it is material also to observe in defence of the British authorities, that they had made preparations even for what they did not expect; and hardly had the Sikhs entered British territory, when an army, adequately equipped for anything that seemed to be within the range of possibility, advanced to meet them.

Declining the conflict gallantly offered them by Sir John Littler at Ferozepore, the Sikhs, who outnumbered him as six to one, pushed on in two divisions—one to Moodki and the other to Ferozeshuhr—

[1] Marshman's *History of India*, vol. iii. p. 272.

and, on December 18 and 21, followed two pitched battles against foes such as, happily, we had never had to face before in India. The interest attaching to the conflict resembles that which belongs to the war between Rome and Pyrrhus, when, for the first time, the Roman legion met the Macedonian phalanx, and a national militia found themselves pitted against a highly trained and veteran army of mercenaries. In the Sutlej campaign now opening, the Sikh, trained by French and Italian officers, and inspired by religious as well as national enthusiasm, crossed swords, for the first time, with the Bengal Sepoy, who ate the Company's salt, and fought for us simply because he did so. And if our army had consisted of Sepoys only, the result would certainly not have been in favour of the Sepoys. It needed all the reckless valour of the grand old Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hugh Gough; all the chivalrous devotion of the Governor-General, who, like Scipio Africanus of old, cheerfully waived his pre-eminence and consented to take the second place, to restore the waning fortunes of the day. It needed all that the imbecility, the cowardice, and even the treachery of the Sikh commanders, Lal and Tej Sing, could do, to compel their dare-devil soldiers to know when they were beaten, and to bend before the storm.

But the battle of Moodki was only the prelude to a greater. Three days later, the real struggle took place at Ferozeshuhr. The Sikh army, 33,000 strong, had entrenched itself in a formidable position, defended by a hundred heavy guns. It was not till nearly four in the afternoon of the shortest day in the year that Sir Hugh Gough, with characteristic recklessness, gave the order to storm their entrenchments! Again and again, our battalions charged right up to the muzzles of the enemy's guns; and, again and again, they were driven back, with heavy loss, by the Sikh infantry, who stood unmoved to meet them. It was an experience new for us in Indian warfare, and drove us, for the first time, to respect our foes. As night closed, our troops found themselves half outside and half within the enemy's position, unable either to advance or retreat. Regiments were mixed up with regiments, and officers with men, in the wildest confusion. The enemy's camp was on fire in several places, and was enlivened by frequent explosions; but their heavy guns still kept playing on our men as they lay exhausted on the frozen ground not three hundred yards off. What the Governor-General did during this 'night of terrors,' as it was justly called, throwing himself down to rest, now by the side of one set of disheartened men, now of another, cheering

them up for the morrow's work, and, anon, leading them himself through the darkness in a desperate charge upon 'Futteh Jung,' the monster gun which was dealing death upon their ranks, and triumphantly spiking it,[1] reads like the record of some Homeric chieftain, or of an Alexander, a Hannibal, or a Cæsar come to life again. Well might the veteran of the Peninsular War say that he had 'never known a night so extraordinary as this;' and well too, when the morning dawned, might he exclaim, in the words of Pyrrhus, whose romantic conflict with Rome this seemed likely now to resemble in more ways than one, 'Another such victory and we are undone!'

Happily for our Indian Empire, the treachery of Lal Sing on the following day was still more pronounced, and the victory which crowned our efforts was much more decisive. The enemy's camp was taken; their army was put to flight; a new army which came up under Tej Sing from Ferozepore and had not yet drawn a sword, hesitated, for some inscrutable reason, to attack our worn-out troops, who had not tasted food for thirty-six hours and had fired away almost their last round of ammunition; and, by the evening, the whole Sikh force was in full retreat.

Never, except at the very crisis of the Mutiny, was India in greater danger than during these two days and this night of terror. It was a Cadmean victory that we had won; and a Cadmean victory it might have remained, had not Sir Henry Hardinge, who had lost a seventh of his army, had seen ten out of his twelve *aides-de-camp* wounded or killed at his side, and was mourning the loss, among many others equally distinguished in recent Indian history, of D'Arcy Todd and Broadfoot, bethought him of the strenuous and energetic magistrate with whom he had so lately spent those interesting days at Delhi. It was now, at the very crisis of the struggle, that the Governor-General, unable to follow up his victory from the want of ammunition, of siege guns, and of provisions, and unable to fall back towards his base, because to do so would invite another invasion of the still unbroken Sikh army, wrote, in his own handwriting, and in hot haste, as its contents show, a pressing note to the Collector and Magistrate of Delhi to come to his aid. The opportunity had thus at length come to the man, and the man was not wanting to the opportunity. He had put his own foot into the stirrup, and it was not likely now that he would fail to leap into the saddle.

[1] See the graphic description of the battle in Cunningham's admirable *History of the Sikhs*, pp. 301–3.

The neighbourhood of Delhi had been already much drained by the preparations for the war, by the marching and countermarching of troops, and, it must be added, by the passing and repassing, even in years of peace, of the huge camps of the Governor-General or the Commander-in-Chief, as they moved along the great thoroughfare towards the North-West. John Lawrence had not been slow, as I have already shown, to point out the abuses to which the purveyance system was liable, and now, curiously enough, he had to apply that system himself on the most extensive and unprecedented scale. His sensitiveness to right and wrong made him not less, but infinitely more, capable for the task that was imposed upon him. He managed, partly by personal influence, partly by promises of adequate pay, which he took care should reach the hands of the right persons, to raise in that thinly peopled country, within a very short space of time, the extraordinary number of 4,000 carts, each of which, as he arranged, was to be driven by its owner; and as a result of his admirable arrangements hardly any of the drivers deserted.

As soon as the great magazine of Delhi, in which men worked day and night moulding bullets and turning out every instrument of death, had done its part, John Lawrence despatched the whole train on its journey of two hundred miles along the great northern road, in time to take a share—the lion's share—in the crowning victory of Sobraon. Indeed, without his exertions, Sobraon would have been impossible, or, at all events, indefinitely postponed. The Sikhs, encouraged by our inability to follow up our success at Ferozeshuhr, and putting it down to cowardice, had again crossed the Sutlej under Runjore Sing, had inflicted a severe reverse on Sir Harry Smith at Buddowal, and had been defeated by him in turn, but certainly not disgraced, on January 28, at Aliwal.

On February 9, the long train of heavy guns dragged by stately elephants, of ammunition, of treasure and supplies of every kind, reached the camp from Delhi. The spirits of officers and men rose at the sight, and, on the following day, the decisive battle was fought. The Sikh troops, basely betrayed by their leaders, who had come—so it was said, and not without some appearance of truth—to a secret understanding with us, fought like heroes. One old chief, whose name should be recorded—Sham Sing—'among the faithless faithful only found,' clothed in white garments, and devoting himself to death, like Decius of old, called on those around him to strike for God and the Guru, and, dealing death everywhere around him, rushed

manfully upon his own. The Sikhs were, once more, in a position of their own choice, and, once more, the impetuous Commander-in-Chief, in defiance of the rules of war, charged with splendid gallantry the guns of the enemy in front. It was in this one respect the battle of Ferozeshuhr over again. But, taught by experience, Sir Hugh Gough began it at seven in the morning instead of at four in the afternoon, and by eleven A.M. the fighting was over. The Sikhs had fought with a broad and swollen river in their rear, and many hundreds whom the cannon or the sword would have spared, were swept away in its waters.

The battle of Sobraon ended the campaign and the war. The Punjab was prostrate at Lord Hardinge's feet, and the unprovoked attack of the Khalsa on our territories gave him an unquestioned right to annex the whole. But there were difficulties in the way. The advanced season; the exhaustion of our army, which now contained barely 3,000 European troops; the probable expense of the administration of so poor and so vast a country; the salutary dislike of the Company and its best servants to all unnecessary extension of territory; the advantage of having a brave and partially civilised race between ourselves and the more ferocious and untameable tribes of Afghanistan, wars with whom would bring us neither gain nor glory;—all these were arguments against annexation, and Sir Henry Hardinge, with that prudence and that moderation which were habitual to him, determined to be content with a part when he might have clutched at the whole, and to give the Sikhs another chance—a *bonâ fide* chance—of maintaining their independence. On the outbreak of the war he had formally proclaimed the annexation of the protected Sikh domain on our side of the Sutlej, and he now determined to cripple the power of the Khalsa for further aggression by confiscating the Jullundur Doab—together with the adjacent hill tracts on the other side of the Beas, Kangra, Nurpore, and Nadoun. The expenses of the war were, according to invariable custom, to fall also upon the vanquished. But these the Durbar, alike profligate and insolvent, professed its inability to pay, and in lieu thereof, the Governor-General arranged to take over the highlands of Jummoo and that earthly paradise, the valley of Kashmere. But while the Punjab was independent it was impossible for us to keep a satisfactory hold of Jummoo. And, by a very questionable stroke of policy, which had been arranged beforehand, and which has brought woes innumerable on the unhappy Kashmiris ever since, we handed it

over to the Dogra Rajpoot, Golab Sing, who paid us down at once in the hard cash which he had stolen from the Lahore Durbar. He was an unscrupulous man, but an able ruler, amenable to our influence, and would now be bound down by the only obligation he would be likely to recognise—his own self-interest—to aid us in checking any further ebullition of Khalsa fury.

But who was to rule the country which we had annexed and intended to keep within our grip—the Jullundur Doab? Who but the sturdy Collector who had made his name to be a watchword for ability, order, economy, indefatigable work throughout the Delhi district, and who, it might be confidently hoped, would be able to manage Rajpoots, Gudis, and Kashmiris in the highlands, as he had been already able to manage Jats, Ranghurs, and Goojurs below? With two weak corps of native infantry and one battery of native artillery, he had preserved perfect order during these troublous times in the imperial city, while war was raging, and raging not always to our credit or our advantage, within our own territories, not two hundred miles away. He had ridden about the city during these three months of peril, amidst its turbulent populace, attended by his single orderly as though in time of profound peace. In anticipation of the annexation on which he had determined, Sir Henry Hardinge had written, some time before, to Thomason, the distinguished Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, asking him to send up John Lawrence for a high executive appointment in the Cis-Sutlej states, which had been already annexed. Thomason, who was primarily responsible for the safety of his own provinces, thought that Lawrence could not be spared from Delhi at such a crisis, and sent up instead another officer whom he deemed to be 'well qualified' for the post. But the well-qualified officer was sent back without ceremony to the place whence he came, and the peremptory message, 'Send me up *John Lawrence*,' showed that the Governor-General was not to be trifled with; that he had made up his mind; and that John Lawrence, and no one else, was, as soon as the war was over, to be the ruler of the Jullundur Doab.[1] And accordingly, on March 1, 1846, he was ordered to

[1] I owe this incident, in its outlines, to an interesting and suggestive pamphlet on Lord Lawrence by John Thornton, who, at the time referred to, was Secretary to the Government of the North-West Provinces. He says of the officer first sent up by Thomason to Lord Hardinge, 'Though a man of much literary and intellectual ability, he had never shown the energy of mind and body which the intro-

repair to Umritsur, the religious capital of the Sikhs, there to receive the Governor-General's instructions for the onerous and honourable post for which his merits, and his merits alone, had recommended him.

I will end this chapter by giving the drift of a few personal reminiscences contributed by Colonel Balcarres Ramsay, who had made John Lawrence's acquaintance some years before in Bonn, and who happened to come across him again at this turning-point in his career. They give a lively picture of some of the principal personages connected with the Sutlej campaign :—

On arriving at Delhi, on my way from Bombay to join the head-quarters camp during the first Sikh war, I found that John Lawrence, my old Bonn friend, was Collector there. I well remember the meeting. He was standing on the stairs outside his house talking to Hindu Rao, a great hanger-on of the English at that time, and a man whose house afterwards became well known as one of the most critical positions on the ridge before Delhi. John was pulling up his shirt-sleeves and feeling his muscles, a very favourite attitude of his. He seemed delighted to see me, and abruptly dismissed his other guest with, 'Now you gao Mr. Rao,' who obsequiously salaamed and disappeared; and, after a chat on old times, he told me that he had just been summoned by Lord Hardinge to join his camp on important business, and that, if I would wait two days, we would go up together.

Accordingly we started in company, travelling by dawk palanquin. During the night he was seized with a most violent attack of cholera. So ill was he that I feared he would have died on the road. But, fortunately, we came upon the tents of a civilian, William Ford, who was out in the district, and there we were able to apply energetic remedies which saved his life. So powerful was his constitution, that, in a very few hours, we were on our journey again. Years afterwards, I met him in the streets of London, just after he had been appointed Governor-General. He said to me, 'If it had not been for you, I should not now be Governor-General of India,' alluding to that night.

We parted at Loodiana, he making the best of his way to head-quarters, while I, having no official status, was detained for a time. I was however, destined soon to come across Sir Henry Lawrence, and incur his displeasure. I had an order to impress horses between Loodiana

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duction of our system of government into the new province would have required. Far less could he have carved out for himself such a destiny as Lawrence afterwards achieved. His nomination was, in fact, an error in judgment which was very rare with that just and estimable man, and that unrivalled administrator, James Thomason.'

and Ferozepore, belonging to the Puttiala Horse. At one place I took what I thought to be the best animal of the lot; but, unfortunately, it belonged to a Sikh from the Manjha, who, after the treaty, had come down to see a relative in the Puttiala Horse. He fired at me as I was mounting, and I had a narrow escape. I arrived at the camp at Lahore just as the Governor-General and his *cortège* were about to meet the young Maharaja, and receive his submission. There was a grand Durbar, and when the Koh-i-Noor was handed round for our inspection, W. Edwards, the Under-Secretary to Government in the Foreign Department, was put in charge of it. He was extremely nervous, and took it round himself from one Staff Officer to another. Just as he had placed it in my hands, Sir Henry Hardinge sent for him. I naturally passed it on to the next officer, and when Edwards hurried back and demanded the precious jewel, I never shall forget the agony depicted in his face as he rushed down the ranks of staff officers frantically demanding it.

That night I dined at the Governor-General's table, where there was a large and illustrious party assembled, among them Sir Charles Napier, Lord Elphinstone, Lord Gough, Charles West, afterwards Earl de la Warr, Sir Henry Lawrence, Herbert Edwardes, and, I think, John Lawrence. Dazzled by the lights, and desperately fatigued by my long journey from Bombay, I fell asleep almost immediately after sitting down to dinner. Just as I was dozing off, I heard Sir Henry Hardinge say, 'Let him sleep, poor boy, he is very tired.' I was awakened at the close of dinner by a loud burst of laughter, occasioned by the following incident. Herbert Edwardes, who was one of the party, had been writing some powerful articles in the press, under the name of 'Brahminy Bull.' Towards the close of dinner, Arthur Hardinge—'dear little Arthur,' his father's idol—asked him to take a glass of wine with him. Every eye was turned upon Edwardes, Sir Charles Napier's in particular, as it was said that an appointment which had been recently conferred on the young officer was given with a view to stop his too facile pen. Such was the gossip in camp; so the amusement of all present may be imagined when 'dear little Arthur,' in his clear boyish accents, shouted from the other end of the table, 'I suppose you will not write any more "Brahminy Bull" articles now, will you, Mr. Edwardes?' No one laughed more heartily than Lord Hardinge, who shook his fist playfully at his son.

After dinner I found myself confronted by a tall, grave-looking man, who said, 'You must not be so *zubberdust* [high-handed] with the natives. I asked him to what he alluded. He replied, 'You seized a Sikh's horse the other day.' I said I had an order to use the horses on the road. 'Yes,' he said, 'but not a Sikh's.' 'Well, but,' I remonstrated, 'he nearly shot me.' 'Of course,' replied Sir Henry Lawrence—for he it was—'and he was perfectly justified in so doing. The treaty had just been signed, and he was proceeding to see his friends, when his property was violently

taken from him by you.' I could only bow an assent, having nothing to urge in my defence. Poor Sir Charles Napier was much dejected at being too late for all the hard fighting. He asked me to accompany him back to Scinde on my return to the Governor of Bombay's Staff. The night before he went, I was taken ill. Sir Charles rode the first day about thirty-five miles, and the second an equally long distance; so there was no chance of my overtaking him. This, however, turned out fortunately for me, as Sir Henry Hardinge placed me on his personal Staff.

I saw a good deal of John Lawrence at that time. He had always had a great deal of fun about him, and it was irrepressible even now. One day, I happened to be in the same howdah with him and three or four others, on the back of an elephant going through the streets of Lahore, while our army was encamped before it. Seeing an officer approaching in solitary state on another elephant, he drove his alongside of it and said to me, 'Youngster, we are rather crowded here, you are one too many for us, there's a very nice old gentleman who will welcome you with open arms; now jump in quick.' I confess I had misgivings as to the 'nice old gentleman;' but to save myself from falling between the two elephants, I had to clasp him round the neck, whereupon the 'nice old gentleman' roared at me, 'What —— do you mean by boarding me in this fashion?' I said, 'Sir, it is not my fault; but John Lawrence said you were very amiable, and that you would welcome me with open arms.' 'Ah!' he replied, 'I'll pay off Master John for this.' The old gentleman in question was Colonel Stuart, the Military Secretary to the Government of India, who, though a most estimable person, could hardly be called 'amiable.'

CHAPTER VIII.

COMMISSIONER OF TRANS-SUTLEJ STATES. 1846.

THE point which we have now reached in the life of John Lawrence is that at which he emerges from comparatively private into public life; from posts which, however important, were yet only subordinate, to one in which he stands on his own foundation; from the care of populations which had long been subject to our rule, to that of a race who had never felt its stress and had just joined in the great, and, at one time almost successful, effort, to oust us from our hold of North-Western India. It was a great leap, which carried him, at the early age of thirty-four years, clear over the heads of all his contemporaries and of many also of his seniors, and roused feelings of natural jealousy in some of those whom he had distanced, which have hardly yet spent their force.

The thoughts of John Lawrence, his letters and his acts, no longer now affect his friends or relatives alone, or that portion of the natives over whom he rules. They take a wider sweep. They have a bearing on the government of India and on the momentous events which were coming on. That John Lawrence fully appreciated the significance of the change, and began now to look upon himself as one who might 'have a future,' and need not necessarily 'be content to wait for it,' is indicated by his beginning, like other rising officials, to preserve in huge folio volumes copies of those letters which, being neither strictly official nor strictly private, form so large a part of all Indian correspondence, and are known in India by the name of 'demi-official.' It was a practice which he never afterwards dropped, and his biographer, whose chief complaint has hitherto been the meagreness of the written materials placed at his disposal, is now inclined to complain of the very opposite, of the embarrassing exuberance of materials, which yet never tell their own tale completely, and from which he has to winnow, as best he can, such grains

as are of permanent historical interest, or throw light on the character of the man.

The Jullundur period is one of the busiest of John Lawrence's life, and it will be well to inquire first what were the geographical and historical conditions of the country over which he was called upon to preside. The Jullundur Doab lies between the rivers Sutlej and Beas, and is, for the most part, a rich champaign country inhabited by Jats, who hereabouts, as John Lawrence describes them, were 'a most industrious painstaking race, very quiet and orderly, who had cultivated every mile of waste ground, and were, apparently, very glad to submit to our rule.' The northern part of the Doab consists of ranges of low hills intersected by narrow valleys, and is inhabited by Rajpoot tribes, who, at that time, were split up into many sections and were living under their own chiefs. Besides the Doab proper, there is a vast mountain tract covering an area of some 13,000 square miles, and containing a population of 750,000 souls, which goes stretching away beneath the snowy range with its peaks of 16,000 feet in height, right up to the borders of Ladak in Chinese Tartary. This alpine country contains every variety of scenery, of climate, of soil, and of race, from the lordly Rajpoot down to the lowly Goojur and Jolaha, and is the birthplace of three of the great Punjab rivers—the Beas, the Ravi, and the Chenab. The town which has given to this region its chief historical celebrity, and which I shall presently have to describe in detail, is the famous fortress of Kangra. But the whole country bristled with little hill fortresses, which were strong by nature if not by art, and were generally held by independent chiefs whose subjects were remarkable for their courage and their high sense of honour. Would these hundred little fortresses yield to the newly appointed Commissioner, backed by an armed force, in the peaceful manner in which the walled village had yielded, some years before, to the importunity of the solitary Collector of Delhi?

John Lawrence lost no time in buckling down to his work. It was on March 1, 1846, that he received his appointment from the Governor-General at Umritsur, and by the 30th of the same month the Governor-General was paying him a return visit at Jullundur, where he had already got well on with the most important and most difficult task of the ruler of a newly annexed province, the settlement —of course, at present, only a summary settlement—of its revenue. He had hoped to complete the work of that particular portion of his

province in the first week of April; but the incursion of a Sikh chief from the other side of the Beas, and the disturbed state of the country bordering on the hills, warned him to drop the pen, to take up the sword, and to move northwards to Hoshiarpore. During this first month he had been working alone in his new dominions. 'I have not yet been joined,' he says, 'by one of my assistants. I work from ten to twelve hours every day, and yet I daily leave much undone.' By April 10, two out of the four assistants who had been promised him had arrived—the one, somewhat impracticable and desultory, a thorn in his side the whole time that he remained with him; the other, a man of great ability and energy, who, though he was uninitiated as yet into the mysteries of revenue, and therefore was unable to help in that department, was destined under John Lawrence's tuition to become a high authority on the subject. The friendship formed with Robert Cust was a life-long one, and the circumstances attending his first interview with his chief have, after the lapse of thirty years, been thus recalled by him :—

It seems but yesterday that I first stood before John Lawrence, in April 1846, at the town of Hoshiarpore, the capital of a district in the Jullundur Doab, which was my first charge. I found him discussing with the Postmaster-General the new lines of postal delivery, and settling with the officer commanding the troops the limits of his cantonments. Harry Lumsden, then a young subaltern, was copying letters. Seated round the small knot of Europeans were scores of Sikh and Mohammedan land-holders, arranging with their new lord the terms of their cash assessment. John Lawrence was full of energy—his coat off, his sleeves turned up above his elbows—and was impressing upon his subjects his principles of a just state demand, and their first elementary ideas of natural equity; for, as each man touched the pen, the unlettered token of agreement to their leases, he made them repeat aloud the new trilogue of the English Government: 'Thou shalt not burn thy widow; thou shalt not kill thy daughters; thou shalt not bury alive thy lepers;'[1] and old greybeards, in the families of some of whom there was not a single widow, or a female blood-relative, went away chanting the dogmas of the new Moses, which, next year, were sternly enforced. Here I learnt my first idea of the energetic order and the rapid execution which make up the sum total of good administration. Here I first knew the man, who was my model, my

[1] In Hindustani :—

'Bewa mat jaláo;
Beti mat máro;
Korhi mat dabáo.'

friend, and my master, till, twenty years later, I sat at his Council board in Calcutta, and, thirty years later, consulted him on details of the affairs of the Church Missionary Society, and joined his committee in opposition to what he believed to be the mistaken policy of a second Afghan War.

Hercules Scott, another of John Lawrence's early assistants, also gives a few first impressions of this period which should be preserved :—

I had been only a few months in harness in India, and had acquired, therefore, only the most elementary knowledge of my duties, when I found myself, in May 1846, transferred to the rule of Mr. John Lawrence in the Trans-Sutlej States. In writing to report myself to him, I expressed my desire that he would place me under a civilian, not under a military man. He acknowledged my letter in a few curt lines. 'Your aim,' he wrote, 'ought to be employment under a good officer, be his coat red or black.' With this stern but characteristic remark he directed me to proceed to Jullundur as assistant to the Deputy-Commissioner there. It was not till the close of that year that he was able to come to Jullundur, and I to make his acquaintance. I held him in great awe at first, a feeling which was intensified by his strict oversight of all the proceedings of his subordinates, and by a certain ruggedness of manner and exterior, under which, as I afterwards found, the warmest and kindliest of hearts lay concealed. My work must have bristled with irregularities and blunders, which were duly cauterised, but he made allowance for the unequal combat which, as a young hand, I had endeavoured to maintain, and reported very kindly of me to Government. The illness of the Deputy-Commissioner brought me henceforward into frequent contact with the Commissioner. The awe with which he had inspired me soon wore off, and our acquaintance ripened into a thorough confidence and attachment. Pressing as were his own engagements, it was never the wrong time to apply to him for advice or guidance in carrying out one's duties. His grasp, both of principles and details, in fiscal, revenue, police, and judicial matters, was at once comprehensive and minute. Nothing pleased him better than to open the stores of his experience for our benefit. His own appetite for work was insatiable, and he expected, and, I think, not in vain, a like devotion from us. A drone or a shirk could not tarry in his sight. There were, as it appeared to me, certain guiding principles which ran through his whole texture, and were constantly impressed on us: duty to Government, consideration for the natives, order and promptitude in work, personal self-sacrifice, justice between man and man. He illustrated these principles in his own life, and many of his disciples in the Punjab school learned to reflect in their own persons these characteristic features of their head.

Before the energy which John Lawrence threw into his work difficulties seemed to fly, and he had not been in the Doab more than a month when, with that manly frankness and simplicity which marks him throughout his career, he told Frederick Currie, the Secretary to Government in the Foreign Department, exactly what he had done, what he had not done, and what he thought he would, one day, be able to do. That which, in other people, might be put down as self-assertion is in him a bare statement of fact, as far removed from affectation of modesty as it is from ostentation or display :—

As far as I am concerned as supervisor, I could easily manage double the extent of country. It is on the efficiency of the executive that the results must depend. Of five officers nominated under me, three have never joined, and the other two I have had with me but four days. With five men present, I could manage this country in first-rate style, hill and plain, even though everyone, with the exception of ——, is wholly new to the duty. Mackeson may have a greater extent of territory (the Cis-Sutlej States) than I have, but recollect that two-thirds of his is an old country, which is, or ought to have been, long since settled. I only ask you to wait six months, and then contrast the civil management of the two charges. . . . . After what I have said, I think you ought to give me Harry Lumsden, for he is a good linguist, and a steady fellow. If you send young civilians they cannot be of much use for the first year; however, do as you think best. I can only make the most of the instruments you put into my hands.

The petition thus made was duly complied with, and Harry Lumsden, whose good sword has done service since then in many a border fight, and who was for many years one of the most dashing of John Lawrence's 'wardens of the marches,' soon appeared. With him came also Lieutenant Edward Lake, of the Bengal Engineers, afterwards one of the most efficient soldier-politicals in the Punjab, and who was now entrusted with the revenue settlement of Nurpore. 'I like Lake very well; he is a nice little fellow,' John writes to his brother Henry; 'but all your politicals look more to politics than to statistics and the internal economy of the country.' It is pleasant to think that four of John Lawrence's earliest assistants in the Jullundur Doab—Cust, Lumsden, Lake, and Hercules Scott, in spite of his stern rule and his insatiable appetite for work, or it may be, perhaps, because of them—proved his warm friends for life.

John Lawrence had hardly finished his work in the plains when

news reached him from the hills that the fort of Kote-Kangra had closed its gates, had repaired its defences, and that its determined leader, with a garrison of three hundred veteran Sikhs, had fired three cannon-shots upon the small force of Lieutenant Joseph Davy Cunningham, the accomplished and earnest historian of the Sikhs, and had declared that he would not surrender its keys unless the 'Lion of the Punjab,' Runjeet Sing himself, returned from the dead and demanded them of him.

The hill fortress which breathed this proud defiance could trace back its history, and that too no ignoble one, for two thousand years. 'At a time when our ancestors were unreclaimed savages, and the Empire of Rome was yet in its infancy, there was a Kutoch monarchy, as it was called, with an organised government at Kangra,'[1] and its rulers had, ever since that time, more or less swayed the destinies of the surrounding hill states. The fort stands on a precipitous and isolated rock four hundred feet high, and is connected with the main range of hills only by a narrow neck of land, twenty yards wide. This neck is defended by strong walls built up against the solid rock, which has been scarped for the purpose, and a winding passage through seven different gateways gives access to the fortress.

Fifty years before William the Conqueror had landed in England, Mahmud of Ghuzni, spurred on by the reputed wealth of Kangra, and by his fierce iconoclastic zeal, had sacked its sacred temple of Jowala Mukhi. In the sixteenth century, in the time of our Elizabeth, the great Emperor Akbar had himself led an expedition thither, and, as his famous chancellor Todar Mull expressed it, 'had cut off the meat and left the bones,' meaning that he had taken all the valleys, of which the Kangra is the richest and most beautiful, and had left only the bare hills. Early in the present century, Sansa Chand, the hereditary king of the Kutoch Rajpoots, raised the standard of rebellion against the Mogul Emperor, recovered the Kangra fortress, the home of his ancestors, and, from it, began to conquer the surrounding hill states. The threatened mountaineers called in the Ghoorkas to their aid, while Sansa Chand called in the Sikhs to his; and before the virgin fortress, which had never yet fallen by assault, Sikh and Ghoorka engaged, for the first time, in

[1] See the *Kangra Report*, drawn up by George Barnes, for an admirable description, to which I am much indebted, of the fort, the people, and their history.

deadly combat. The Sikhs won, and the wily Runjeet Sing appropriated to himself the apple of discord, and from it managed to hold in check the whole hill country. Such was the history and such the situation of the fortress which now refused to open its gates to the British Government.

John Lawrence was alive to the emergency, and, on May 1, accompanied by Harry Lumsden, he started for the scene of action. On his way thither he received the submission of all the hill chiefs and the hearty support of a few of them, among whom were the Rajas of Mundi and Nadoun. He found, on his arrival, that the fort was still holding out, though blockaded by a corps of Native Infantry which had been sent up a month before to take peaceful possession of it. Early in the century, the redoubtable fortress had held out successfully against the Ghoorkas for a three years' siege, and if it should prove now able to resist the British for as many months as it had resisted the Ghoorkas years, John Lawrence feared that there would be a renewal of the war all along the hills. So he applied to Wheeler, the General in command of the Division, for some heavy guns, and bade Harry Lumsden fix upon the best route onward from the Beas, where all roads stopped. The sequel shall be told as nearly as possible in John Lawrence's own words:—

Additional native troops, with a pair of heavy guns, had, meantime, been slowly winding up to the point on the Beas which lay nearest to Kangra. Here the level country ended, and no such thing as a siege gun had ever yet been seen in the Kangra hills. There was no road, nothing beyond a narrow pathway. But Harry Lumsden had explored the proper route, and the engineers now set to work to construct a temporary road on which the guns could travel.

Within a week, the work was accomplished, and the guns conveyed a distance of some forty miles into our camp, which lay at the foot of the hill on which the fort was situated. In the evening, a deputation from the Sikh garrison came out of the fort to hear our terms. The members three greybeards, were quiet and courteous, but determined. For several hours they remained talking over matters with Colonel Lawrence and myself. At last, as they rose to make their salaam, and were on the eve of departure, I suggested that they should stay and see the guns at break of day ascend the hill. They listened and agreed, but with a gesture which denoted incredulity. At four A.M. they were awakened by vociferous cheering. They started from their rough beds and rushed out, believing that it was a sally from the garrison. They were soon undeceived; for, a few moments later, there appeared a couple of large elephants slowly and majestically pulling an eighteen-pounder, tandem fashion, with a

third pushing behind. In this manner, gun after gun wound its way along the narrow pathway, and, by the help of hundreds of Sepoys, safely rounded the sharp corners which seemed to make further progress impossible. The Sikh elders looked on with amazement, but said not a word. When the last gun had reached the plateau, they took their leave and returned to the fort. In an hour the white flag was raised. The garrison defiled out man by man, and, throwing down their arms, quietly took their way to the plains. Thus passed by what might have developed into a very serious affair.

While these military movements were going on and this bloodless victory over a redoubtable fortress was being achieved—a victory which, it will be seen now, was as bloodless and complete as that of the Collector over the Delhi village—the administration of the district was not neglected for a single day. The police were distributed all over the country, courts were established in suitable places, and the summary settlement of the revenue prosecuted. While Cust was finishing the work which had been begun by his chief at Jullundur and Hoshiarpore, and Lake was settling the revenue of Nurpore, the Commissioner himself managed to do all the rest, Kangra, Hurripore, Nadoun, Spiti, and Kulu. He traversed hundreds of miles of country in the process, and before May 1, the beginning, that is, of the official year, exactly two months from the date of his appointment, and from our first occupation of the country, the whole operation was completed.

The personal intercourse which John Lawrence had had with natives in his earlier career now stood him in good stead. The reform which he was most bent on introducing—the substitution of a land-tax paid in money for one paid in kind—was a rude shock to native ideas; for, from time immemorial, their ancestors had paid the state dues in grain. They would fain still have stood upon the old ways, and they came to John Lawrence, sometimes in large bodies, sometimes one by one, asking to be allowed to do as they had always done. The Commissioner, who was resolved to carry out his project—by persuasion if possible, but anyhow to carry it—explained to these rigid conservatives the advantages of the new system, and pointed out the abuses inseparably connected with the old one. The poverty of the remonstrants, if not their will, consented, and when the reform had once been introduced and its advantages perceived, there was no more wish to return to the old state of things. The middlemen and tax-farmers who preyed on the agricultural class were swept away for ever, and it was calculated that a relief of from fifteen to twenty per cent. had been made

on each man's payments, while the total which found its way into the coffers of the state was as nearly as possible the same!

I well remember how Lord Lawrence, in a conversation which I had with him shortly before the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War, dwelt upon the extraordinary difficulty he had found in persuading the natives to give up the old system of payment in kind; how he remarked that nearly all the evils to which the subject races in Turkey were exposed had their counterparts in India under native rule, and how he pointed out that the subject races of Turkey would be likely to resist most strongly the particular reform which lay at the root of all the others.

That the reforms introduced by John Lawrence were generally beneficial is evident from the verdict of George Barnes, his successor in the Commissionership, given deliberately, some seven years afterwards, in his 'Kangra Report:'—

> The grain payments were commuted at easy rates into money, and the people, after a little persuasion, were brought to accede to the innovation. I may add that this measure, effected by the Commissioner (John Lawrence), was attended by the most complete success. The settlement itself was the fairest and best in the district, and the people are so well satisfied with the change that they would gladly pay a higher revenue than revert to their old usage. Money assessment has left them masters within their own village areas. They may cultivate whatever crops they please. It has taught them habits of self-management and economy, and has converted them from ignorant serfs of the soil into an intelligent and thrifty peasantry. They appreciate the discretion with which they are now entrusted, and are stimulated by the prospects which industry holds out to them.

It will follow from what I have already said of the history of the hill country and its Rajas, that it would be of prime importance to effect a just and satisfactory settlement of their claims. This subject was at once taken in hand. The circumstances of each chief were carefully considered. All the fiefs found in their possession were maintained, while they were, at the same time, freed from the military service and the fiscal exactions which had been the cause of so much vexation under Sikh rule. Any rights of independent jurisdiction which were found to be in existence at the time of our occupation were confirmed; but John Lawrence, acting on principles which will be often brought before us in his subsequent career, stoutly refused to restore any such exceptional privileges, if they had once lapsed. A passage in one of his letters to Sir Frederick Currie is of special interest

as indicating at this early date the point on which he was to differ most widely from his brother Henry, when they were sitting at the same Council board in the Punjab :—

I have been reading over Erskine's report on the Simla Hills. His idea of royal families and crowned heads is ridiculous. These Rajas were like the petty barons of old. They had their little castles, from whence they sallied out to plunder the country or each other, and from which they overawed the people. They ruled by the sword, and held their lands by the same tenure. The strong swallowed up the weak. The Ghoorkas would have conquered them. They called in the Sikhs, who drove out the Ghoorkas and conquered for themselves. The hill-men were glad to get rid of the Sikhs, who bullied them, and therefore made common cause with us. I certainly think it would be madness in us to give them back much of their old power and extensive possessions. Continue to them the jagheers held under the Sikhs, and, if they have done good service in the late war, make them a money present, or even give them an annual stipend in cash, but do not give them more power. The hills are far behind the plains in the intelligence of the people, and the chiefs are behind the people. Civilisation would certainly not progress under their rule. Infanticide, suttee, punishment for witchcraft, are common among them. Besides, it is a mistake to think that by making Rajas and chiefs powerful you attach the country. One lac given in the reduction of assessments and making people comfortable and happy in their homes is better than three lacs given to Rajas. Introduce our laws, our system, our energy and forethought, and you will do real good.

Another evil more deeply rooted even than the payment of taxes in kind, and which prevailed, more or less, over the whole of India, was especially rife among the Rajpoot races of the North-West and the Jullundur Doab. The practice of female infanticide, due, in other parts of the world, either to simple inhumanity or to poverty, is in this part of India the outcome, in the main, of family pride. The Rajpoot deigns not to give his daughter to a member of an inferior subdivision of caste to himself, for he himself would lose caste thereby ; he dares not give her to a member of the same subdivision, because such connections are looked upon as incestuous. The difficulty, therefore, of procuring any eligible husband for his daughter ; the ruinous expense connected, according to immemorial custom, with the celebration of the wedding ; the suspicion with which an unmarried woman is apt to be regarded by the members of her family ; and the ease with which, living in the jealous seclusion of his ancestral

home, the father can get rid of an obnoxious addition to it;—all these causes combined to overpower the voice of parental affection. So wholesale was the destruction of female infant life that, when the attention of philanthropists was first directed to it, whole village communities were found to be without a single girl.

Nor was the practice confined to the Rajpoots. It was still more universal among the Bedis, who were a subdivision of the Khuttri caste and traced back their descent to the Guru Nanuk. They had never allowed a single female child to live, and when the Bedi of Oona, the head of the tribe—in fact, the spiritual head of the Sikh religion—was warned by John Lawrence that he must forbid infanticide throughout his jagheer, he replied, that, if the Sahib so willed it, he would never enter his harem again, and would influence, so far as he could rightly do so, others to do the same, but it was impossible for him to command his dependents to give up so treasured a custom. 'You must do it or give up your lands,' rejoined John, and the stiff-necked old Levite acquiesced in the lesser of two evils, and did give up—his lands.

Those who have never seen John Lawrence, but have accompanied me thus far in my efforts to reproduce the living man, can imagine the grim patience with which he would listen to a solemn deputation from the whole priestly race whose most cherished practice he was thus rudely threatening, and who based their petition on the proclamation issued by the Governor-General that all their rights and customs would be respected.

These Bedis (he writes to a friend) are an extraordinary people. You will scarcely believe it when I tell you that they publicly petitioned me for permission to destroy all their female children; which, it seems, they have, hitherto, invariably done. I sent for some of the most respectable of them, and set forth the enormity of the crime, and our detestation of the practice, before some hundreds of people, and ended by telling them that Government would not only never consent to such a villainous crime being perpetrated under its rule, but that we should certainly hang every man who was convicted of such a murder. I also told them that not a jagheer of theirs would be confirmed until the matter was satisfactorily settled. They are now collecting their elders to confer on the matter. In the meantime, I have issued proclamations and letters to all the chiefs, in which, without mentioning the Bedis, I have denounced, under the highest displeasure of Government and the severest penalties, infanticide, suttee, and the destruction of leprous persons by burying them alive or

throwing them into water. I will make a report on all this to Government directly I hear what the Bedis say.

And those who have seen John Lawrence and enjoyed for themselves the vein of humour which played round even his most serious talk, and relaxed the lines of his scarred and weather-beaten countenance, will not be slow to realise the gesture and the incommunicable something with which, in his later years—sitting perhaps amidst a circle of ladies—he would receive the news of the birth of a daughter in a family which might, perchance, be already too well stocked with them, and would remark, 'Ah! those Bedis were not such bad fellows after all; the only thing that I am disposed to regret in my Indian administration is that I was so hard upon them in the matter of female infanticide!'

A few sentences, taken almost at random from John Lawrence's letters during this time—though it will be remembered that now, and throughout his career, they deal, in the main, with matters of detail, and therefore are of little interest to a subsequent generation—will give some idea of his impatience of a lazy or incapable subordinate; of his vein of grim humour; of the shrewdness with which he was able to discern in the cloud no bigger than a man's hand a danger which might, one day, overspread the firmament and burst in a deluge of ruin on India. 'I do not think,' he says, when discussing the possible resistance of the Kangra garrison, 'that they will hold out; with the country against them and their own Durbar, it would be useless. However, no one can tell what fools may do.' This wholesome incredulity as to the limits of human folly, this 'credo quia impossibile,' often stood him in good stead in dealing with masses of men. He declines to take Runjore Sing, a Sikh, with him in his march against a Sikh garrison, because, as 'renter of hill-states, he had had great opportunities of appropriating villages, which he does not seem to have neglected.' When the Bedis complained that the irregular troops raised by us from their neighbourhood had plundered and annoyed them: 'I dare say they have,' remarked John, 'it would only be like spoiling the Egyptians.'

As regards the impracticable assistant to whom I have already referred, he writes to his brother Henry—

I had to send all ——'s reports back, they are so badly done. He is a *rara avis*, and says his work is killing him. A very innocent murder it would be!

And again, in another letter :—

I really do not know what to do with ——. I can get little or no work out of him, and, with more assistance than any man in the province, he says he is overworked. He has a certain degree of ability, but is hard, violent, and without any system. He put one man in irons on the roads the other day for contempt of court. I wish the Governor-General would make him a Resident! he is enough to provoke a rebellion.

And, on the principle on which he always acted of never saying a word of blame behind a person's back which he would shrink from saying, if necessary, before his face, he writes to him thus :—

My dear ——, I have received your letter. As I do not agree in any respect with the views you there lay down, I think it kinder and fairer to write to you, privately, on the subject before I take any public notice of the matter. I feel that I have nothing to reproach myself with in the late correspondence. I think from the day you joined the division that I have treated you with every consideration, and have supported you wherever I could. A sense of duty alone compelled me to notice your irregularities in the way I have done, and I do not think I could have said less than I did. By your account, I am altogether wrong. In my own judgment, I am right. But I cannot let your letter remain on my record unanswered; let alone admit that you have cause for complaint. You may have worked hard. But I can only judge by results, and I have no hesitation in saying that in doing so you have, in my judgment, fallen far short of your own estimate.

This is not the only letter of the kind preserved in his folios, but there are not many of them, for he generally managed to pass on assistants of this type—if not to a Residency—to some post which would be more congenial to them. When it was a matter of praise he often acted on the opposite principle. He rarely praised a man to his face, and hence it has sometimes been said that he failed fully to appreciate other people's merits. But, as I shall show hereafter, he was lavish enough of his praise behind their backs.

Here is the earliest hint I have found in his papers of a danger which, if its meaning had been fully grasped by the authorities, might have done something towards averting or postponing the Indian Mutiny. 'Government will get as many Rajpoots on the hills as it can want, either for regular or irregular corps. Thousands served in the Sikh army and would do so in ours. I do not think that they will object to go anywhere or do anything. In our regular corps these men will be very valuable, as coming from a different part of the

country and having different ideas and interests from our Oudh Sepoys. As it is now, our Sepoys are nearly all from Oudh and its vicinity, and the majority are Brahmins; hence it is that, in any quarrel, they so readily combine. The Rajpoots here are a very fine people, and, having little to live on at home, they are glad to take service.'

In the occupations which I have described, the first three months of his Commissionership passed away. They were an epitome of the whole three years during which he was to hold the office, and they anticipated faithfully, on a small scale, the responsibilities of the Punjab Board and of the Chief Commissionership. They were months of hard work and rapid progress; and, in the month of June, just when he might have hoped for some diminution of his twelve hours a day at his desk, he was taken ill with a violent attack of fever and ague, which drove him across the hills to recruit his strength at Simla, where his wife and family were then residing. His brother Henry had gone there before him to consult with the Governor-General on the affairs of the Punjab in general. But he, too, was worn out with his labours as Resident at Lahore, and so the already overworked John was, after a few weeks' rest, requested by Lord Hardinge to take temporary charge of his brother's onerous post at the capital of the Punjab, while he was also to retain his own Jullundur Commissionership. How he managed to combine the two, and to make each, in some measure, assist the other, we shall gather from the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

ACTING-RESIDENT AT LAHORE. 1846–1848.

THE one-eyed adventurer of the Punjab who had built up, in his long career, an empire stretching from the point where the waters of the five rivers unite in one majestic stream to the eternal snows of the Himalayas, and, even beyond them again, to the Karakorum Range, and had torn away, from the Afghans on one side, and from the Great Mogul on the other, some of their fairest provinces, died in 1839. It happened to be the very year in which the young English civilian who was, one day, to rule the fabric that he had reared, and to reap vastly more from the plains of the Punjab than he had ever cared to sow, had himself seemed stricken to the death at Etawa, but, as though he was reserved for something great, had determined not to die. Throughout his career, Runjeet Sing had found, or had made, plenty of work for the fiery soldiers of the Khalsa commonwealth. But he had also held them in check with a strong hand, and, with one single exception—the year 1809, when he seemed disposed to claim the Jumna instead of the Sutlej as his south-eastern boundary—had managed to keep on the best of terms with his English neighbours. Not that he was in any way blind to the future. Unable either to read or write, he had the insight of genius, and, on one occasion, as the well-known story goes, he asked to be shown upon a map the parts of India occupied by the English. They were marked in red; and as his informant pointed successively to Madras, Bombay, Bengal, and the North-West Provinces, all overspread by that monotonous and usurping tint, he exclaimed, 'It will soon all be red.'[1] He closed the map, however, with a submission to the inevitable which a good Muslim might have envied, and with a strong practical determination that, if prudence could prevent it, the evil should come, not in his own, but in his successor's days.

[1] Sab Lal hojaega.

The death of Runjeet was followed by six years of anarchy. The strong hand had been withdrawn, and there was the scramble for power and for life usual on the death of an Eastern monarch. One after the other, his chief relatives and ministers came to the front, but only that each—as in the days of Zimri, Tibni and Omri, at Samaria, or of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, at Rome—might, after a brief interval, lose power and life together. 'The people that followed Omri prevailed against them that followed Tibni, so Tibni died and Omri reigned.' Such is the inimitably pregnant sentence which sums up, better than pages of narrative could do, the fortunes of an Eastern dynasty, and often also of an Eastern people.

> The priest who slew the slayer,
> And shall himself be slain,

is, perhaps, an equally pregnant description of the career of nine out of ten of those who aspire to rule such states as Lahore was then, or as Cabul was then and is still. At last, Duleep Sing, a son of Runjeet of tender years, and now best known to fame as an English gentleman devoted to English sport on the most royal scale, had been named, by acclamation, successor to his father. But to proclaim a child the temporal ruler of the Khalsa commonwealth was, of course, to give the power for many years to come to his intriguing mother, the Rani Chunda, and to Lal Sing, her reigning paramour.

But Queen-mother, and boy King, and effeminate vizier, all found that they reigned rather than governed, and that too only on sufferance of the Khalsa army. It was an army turbulent, enthusiastic, fanatical, not knowing what it was to be beaten, composed of some eighty thousand men, trained by French and Italian generals, and supplied with the best artillery then known. Fearing the reckless fury of their soldiery, the Sirdars, as I have already shown, had, in self-defence, turned it against the English, and the four battles, fought within a space of two months, of the Sutlej campaign, if they proved to the Khalsa army that they had at length found their betters, proved also to the English that the Sikh was very different to any foe they had hitherto met.

We began the campaign (says John Lawrence) as we have begun every campaign in India before and since, by despising our foes; but we had hardly begun it before we learned to respect them, and to find that they were the bravest, the most determined, and the most formidable whom we had ever met in India. Hitherto, we had found in all our wars

that we had only to close with our enemies, when, however overwhelming might be the odds against us, victory was certain. But, in this campaign, we found that the Sikhs not only stood to and died at their guns, but that their infantry, even after their guns had been lost, were undismayed and were still willing to contest the victory with us.

With such heroes—the heroes of Ferozeshuhr and Sobraon—Sir Henry Hardinge was willing to conclude peace on equitable conditions. Their independence was left to them ; the claims, such as they were, of the young Maharaja, of the Maharani, and of her lover, who had done so much to betray the cause of the commonwealth in the late war, were duly recognised, and, for the next nine months, an English Resident, with ten thousand men at his back, was to be stationed, by the express request of the Punjab Government, at Lahore. His duties were of the most delicate kind. To curb the turbulence and cut down the numbers of the angry soldiery ; to help the Durbar to bring contentment out of discontent and order out of chaos ; to enable the Sikh Government by the end of the year to stand alone, and so to give the brave Sikh nation one more chance ;—such was the noble but the thankless task imposed upon him. That the chance was to be a *bonâ fide* one, that we were not waiting for a more convenient opportunity, and that our moderation was not merely dictated by our necessities, the strongest guarantee possible was given by the selection of the person who was to act as Resident. The best man in all India for the purpose, the chivalrous champion of native states, the protector of all who were down simply because they were so, the man who was as gentle and considerate as he was high-spirited and brave, was sent to Lahore by Sir Henry Hardinge to fill the post. And, if Troy could have been saved by any right hand, if any native state could have been rescued, in spite of itself, from that uniform red colour which was overspreading the peninsula from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, it would have been by the right hand of Sir Henry Lawrence.

He set to work with a will at once. With the consent of the Durbar, he reduced the number of the soldiery, prevailed on some of them to re-enlist in our service, checked the desire for vengeance among those who had long suffered at the hands of their chiefs, and suppressed a disturbance at Lahore, known as the 'cow riot,' which might have grown into a formidable rising, at the cost of the life of one offender only. The questions connected with the slaughter of the cow are, as I have shown in a previous chapter, a standing difficulty

with our Indian administrators. 'As long,' said a native chief to Captain Eastwick, 'as you English kill the cow and cut its skin, so long there will be an impassable gulf between us;' and the Sikh, though he had thrown off much of his Hinduism, had retained all, perhaps more than all, of the Hindu reverence for the sacred animal.

But Henry Lawrence had been called away to Simla, before he had well begun his uphill work, and his mantle was to fall for the time upon the broad and willing back of his brother John. It is no disparagement at all to John Lawrence to say that the work of the Residency at Lahore was not naturally so congenial to him as it would have been to Henry. He had less sympathy with the native aristocracy by whom he was surrounded; partly, perhaps, because his view of them was too near and too clear; partly, also, I think, because he was less able than his brother to distinguish between those vices which were the natural and necessary result of the system in which they had been brought up, and those which might justly be looked upon as the result of individual depravity. In any case, he had a less enthusiastic belief in the possibility of a satisfactory reorganisation of the country under native rule. It is all the more to his credit, therefore, that he threw himself into his work as though he did thoroughly believe in it. What would have been a delicate and difficult operation enough in Henry's hands was, necessarily, even more so in his; for he was only 'acting' for his brother, and was bound in honour to carry out that brother's general views, even where they most differed from his own. Simla, moreover, was not so remote but that Henry, on the strength of the information regularly supplied to him by his deputy, could have a voice in every important matter at Lahore as it turned up; and, conscious of the general difference of view between himself and his brother, he was, perhaps, more ready to detect opposition where none was either intended or existed. The disadvantages inherent in a system of divided responsibility were thus intensified; for Henry was near enough to criticise or overrule, not near enough to give present help in matters of immediate difficulty.

From August to December 1846 I have been able—and it is only at this period of his life that it is possible to do so—to follow John Lawrence's doings in three different sets of letters; one letter of each set written almost daily. The first set consists of official letters, written with much care and detail to the Government of India; the second, of demi-official letters to his friend Sir Frederick Currie; the

third are private, and were dashed off hastily, with little regard to style or even grammar, to his brother Henry. The more important events which are coming on prevent my giving more than a few extracts from these, and I take them, by preference, from the private letters, since they are the only set of the kind which have come into my hands. Here are portions of three of them, written, from Lahore, as will be observed, on three successive days, almost immediately after he had taken charge there. They are the result of first impressions only, but they have the freshness peculiar to first impressions, and, taken together, they give a fair picture of the selfish and intriguing Sirdars, who, if they hated the English much, hated each other more; of the profligate Maharani and her vizier, Lal Sing; of the efforts made by the acting Resident to obtain for the troops their arrears of pay, to bring the finances into a satisfactory condition, to infuse some little public spirit into the Government, and so to give the country a chance of standing by itself when the time came for our troops to leave. I will only add that no mere selection can give any adequate idea of the energy and the ability, the tact and the temper, the loyalty to his brother, and the absolute unselfishness with which a study of the three sets of letters, as a whole, would show John Lawrence to have thrown himself into his uncongenial and unenviable task :—

Lahore: August 26, 1846.

My dear Hal,—I have little time to write you long yarns of affairs here; the work keeps me busy all day, and the heat is so excessive that I feel I have as much to do as I can well get through. Matters are very quiet. The discipline and order among the troops is greater than anything of the kind that I recollect, and the town is cleaner and healthier than perhaps any city in India. We ride out daily, but hardly meet any of the disbanded soldiery; indeed, I hear they are all quiet at home. I cannot see why Raja Lal Sing should not be able to carry on the government when the army leaves; should he fail, it must be his own fault. I do not think that he would find much difficulty in conciliating the Sirdars if he would only set about it honestly. He promises everything, but, I fear, is not anxious to do what Government wishes, not so much from any wish to oppose Lord Hardinge, as because he really thinks his only chance of maintaining himself is the policy he has hitherto pursued to the chiefs. He is despised for his connection with the Rani, and hated also. But I am not at all sure that his successor, be he who he may, would be much more popular. He is evidently a good deal alarmed at my advent, as well as at my allowing some of the chiefs to

visit me. This, however, will do him good; so long as he had, or thought he had, all the hearing to himself he was comparatively careless. I told him that I was his real friend, and that, though I listened to all, I was not ready to believe all I heard; and that, moreover, if what I did learn was unsatisfactory, I should not conceal it from him. The Maharani is very well; she is said to divide her favours between the Raja and two of the servants of the palace, and to be very charitable to the fakirs, probably by way of making up for such peccadilloes.

Lahore: August 27.

My dear Hal,—Things are *in statu quo* here. The Durbar are in some little tribulation, consulting together privately. The conduct of the Raja is said to have improved lately, especially since I arrived, but the chiefs give him little credit, saying it is only owing to us that he thus acts. Some people say that he will not be sorry when the army leaves, as his authority will then be more complete, and he can then act as he pleases. No doubt at times he feels our interference irksome, but, on the whole, I feel certain that he dreads our departure, and so does the Rani. I had a long conversation with a very clever fellow, a follower of Runjore Sing, whom I knew in the Jullundur Doab as possessing the full confidence of that chief. He says that all the chiefs are against the vizier, Lal Sing, but that, so long as we are here, they will do nothing, and, indeed, perhaps not when we go, for that both they and the army are afraid of another war, but that they hate Lal Sing. I asked him what they wished, and why they did not come to see me and state their grievances, to which he replied that, if they did so, directly the army left, Lal Sing would be revenged on them. I asked him what would satisfy the chiefs, and, if left to themselves, what they would propose; he said that, until the Maharaja was old enough to act for himself, the chiefs would wish an officer to be stationed here to mediate between them and the vizier; that the vizier should not be allowed to confer jagheers at his pleasure and disgrace the old chiefs; and that, on public matters, they should be consulted, and that he should not possess the whole power. He said that the Sikhs, as a nation, would not submit to Lal Sing, and that it was only from fear of us that the people behaved well.

August 28.

My dear Hal,—I am glad you are not to die, though I did not know I had told anyone you would do so. Matters are quiet enough here. Every day I see more and more of the bitter feeling of the Sirdars against Lal Sing. He takes great precautions, and never moves without a strong guard, and is armed himself. This morning he was with us at the Shalimar Gardens, and I observed a double-barrelled pistol in his belt, loaded and capped. Nevertheless, I think he will be assassinated some day, and, perhaps, this would be the best thing that could happen for the

Punjab, for the chiefs would then either set up Sirdar Lena Sing or Chutter Sing; whereas Lal Sing could only be set aside by our strong arm, and, if allowed to live in the Punjab, would be the centre of disaffection, and the Rani would not give him up. They had a slight row the other day, but she said she would follow him over the world, and give up everything for him. He is a sad liar, and yet has ability; and, if he could only be persuaded to act fairly, might weather the storm. I observed to-day that he paid great attention to General Ram Sing, who has the character of being a man of ability and action. A few such soldiers of the Sikhs round him would make a great difference in his position. But think well over what I said yesterday about limiting the vizier's power. He will not stand without it.

I like Sir John Littler much; he keeps up excellent good discipline, and is a fine fellow. I don't think I ever knew the sepoys so well behaved. We should have little difficulty in the event of a war hereafter. The opinion of us as rulers is greatly changed. The only evil is that when we get a country things go smoothly, for the people see the benefit of the change, and are satisfied. But as they die off, or forget the olden days of trouble and misrule, they feel slight twitches from our shoe pinching, and get discontented. The Jullundur is going on beautifully. Cust and Lake will, I think, turn out good officers; —— will never be worth his salt. He is too old to learn. Take care of the wee wife.

A few days later, moved by the ever-increasing difficulties which he saw in the way of our leaving the country entirely to itself, but still most anxious to avoid annexation, John Lawrence came gradually round to the idea of our managing the country for the young Maharaja till he came of age.

September 8.

I am convinced that matters cannot be carried on if we leave the country. The only plan which is both just and politic, so far as I can see my way, is that we put the country in Chancery—that is, manage it until the boy Maharaja arrive at years of discretion. This would be agreeable, I believe, to the chiefs.

The freedom with which, in other letters, he describes the rascality which was going on around him, and expresses his opinion of it, seems to have given some offence to his brother, and, possibly, also in higher quarters still, and he thus defends himself:—

September 13.

My dear Hal,—Edwardes starts to-night, and will be at Jummoo on the 15th. I hope Lumsden will be back in a couple of days, for the miscellaneous work of the town is full as much as one man can do. I have

written to-day a short letter to Government. I have given as few opinions as possible. However, many of the facts are literally opinions, and that, too, the opinions of others. I have been looking over my letters, and do not see any greater variety in my opinions than a man should be allowed in politics. If no margin is allowed, one would have a difficult job. I said I thought that the Raja's great difficulty was the chiefs, and that if he could manage them he might do. So I think now; but he has not done this, and, what is worse, has not done what he might in other respects. I feel convinced now that he will fail; but his failure will arise from his own deficiencies, and not from exterior influences. He is, in some respects, anxious to do well, but takes the wrong course, and instead of meeting advice with argument, simply tells lies. Like an ostrich, he thinks, if his head is hidden, all the rest of his body is covered; so he thinks that, if we don't know what he does, all will go well. I suppose this Kashmere affair will alter the policy of our Government towards the Punjab. I am getting very fair returns of the revenue to-day. I have got about twenty lacs. In a week more I shall have them all.

Should we find it necessary to take the country, the plan will be to make a separate arrangement with Dewan Moolraj, and allow him to continue Dewan under us. He pays the Sikhs twenty-one lacs and keeps up a large army. We can get no returns in detail for that country, for none have ever been rendered. It is said to yield him forty lacs at least. As he would no longer require the same army, he could afford to pay us thirty lacs without difficulty. He had agreed, I understand, to give twenty-six when Jowahir Sing was killed. An arrangement of this kind would, I think, simplify matters if we take the Punjab. I am not advocating that policy, but the contrary. I am only thinking how we could manage if we do. I am still hard at work, never moving off my chair for ten hours a day. I really do not know what would become of this country if they had not me to look after it.

With what frankness and ability John Lawrence laid his views on these and similar subjects before Government, and what a statesman-like grasp he showed even then of questions, which one day would become burning questions, and which he would, himself, have the chief responsibility of deciding, an extract from a long and elaborate despatch, dated September 11, will indicate :—

Feeling convinced that such must be the result of Government either withdrawing the army or maintaining it at Lahore under the present system, it is perhaps stepping beyond the line of my duty to suggest a remedy. At the risk of such being the opinion, I would recommend for the consideration of the Right Honourable the Governor-General, the expediency of Government undertaking the management of the country

in trust for the young Maharaja until he arrives at manhood. It will not, I venture to say, be politic, it will not be just, that we leave it to fall into anarchy. It will not, I conceive, be eventually popular with the Sikhs, who are strongly national, that we take the country ourselves. Those who would feel the advantages of our rule, who estimate the blessings of security to life and property, of perfect toleration to religion, of our encouragement of trade and agriculture, would, no doubt, rejoice; but there are many powerful classes who cannot fail to be inimical to our rule. Such are the chiefs and great holders of rent-free lands, the priests of both persuasions, Hindu and Mohammedan, and, in particular, all people who live by service. To them our system affords not the means of livelihood, or, if it does, it is not in the way they have lived.

Our very existence, in my judgment, depends on our gradually reducing the power and consequence of the chiefs of a country, and, even when we grant them their jagheers for life, we curtail their power, by obliging to submit to rules and systems those who have never hitherto recognised any law but their own will and pleasure. Under the native system, a jagheerdar is a little sovereign with the powers of life and death. He collects the revenues, levies customs, holds courts of justice—in short, he is the baron of olden time. So long as he keeps well with the court, or has power to resist it, he is irresponsible to man. But all this changes under our rule: He can only collect his revenue according to law; he is prohibited from seizing his people's cattle or their children, and he is arraigned and punished for acts which, but a short time before, he committed with impunity. Can he be otherwise than dissatisfied with our rule? In the same way the soldier longs for native rule. He is not fit or inclined for our service. His trade is gone; he is too old or lazy to learn a new one. Crowds of irregular horse and footmen are thrown out of employment and swell the number of the discontented. Even the men of the pen complain. The large fortunes which they accumulated under the native system are not to be had under ours. The collector of a district, the clerk of an office of account, who, under us, will, by steady conduct and hard work, rise from twenty to two hundred rupees a month, will, in the Punjab, if he is a clever fellow, accumulate lacs. Imamuddin, now the rebel Governor of Kashmere, whose father began with nothing, has in the course of ten years accumulated a crore of rupees. . . . Even those who benefit most under our rule are seldom satisfied. They forget the evils of days which have gone by, and only feel the petty annoyances of those now passing. Merchants and bankers who, under our rule, make rapid fortunes and may be said to live and flourish untaxed, are often loud in their complaints on the most trivial and even unreasonable subjects. I mention this, lest we may be led away by the feeling which certainly, so far as I can judge, generally exists among most classes in the Punjab in favour of our assuming the sovereignty of the country.

Day by day, John Lawrence was in the habit of receiving visits from the leading Sirdars—each one of them at deadly feud with the Regent and with most of his brother Sirdars, and each having selfish views of his own to serve; and from these interviews, using the powers of discernment which long intercourse with the natives in the Delhi district had given him, he managed to pick up a complete knowledge of all the twists and turns of the tortuous policy of the Lahore Government, and of all the conflicting interests which were represented in the Durbar. He met duplicity, not by counter-duplicity, but, as he invariably did, by the most absolute straightforwardness, and then, as ever in our dealings with the natives of India, it has been straightforwardness, and not duplicity, statesmanship and not diplomacy, which, wherever it has been employed, has turned out to be the best policy in the end.

John Lawrence's letters to Government contain a gallery of portraits, drawn from the life, of every leading chief at Lahore; and space alone forbids my reproducing them here. When Lal Sing, who was the chief actor in all the court amours, and scandals, and intrigues, came to see John Lawrence, he found, to his extreme surprise, that his host knew as much about them as he did himself. It was the story of Benhadad and Elisha over again. 'The prophet that is in Israel,' said the servants of the puzzled King of Syria to their master, 'telleth the King of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.' In vain did the Regent question his servants as to the means by which John Lawrence knew everything that was going on. *Jan Larens sub janta* (knows everything) had been the spontaneous exclamation of the native of Paniput twelve years before, and *Jan Larens sub janta* was the only explanation that could be offered now to their bewildered master by the servants of the palace at Lahore.

A few short quotations from his letters will illustrate what I have said as to his knowledge of all that was going on inside the palace and outside of it. The Maharani had frequent quarrels and frequent reconciliations with Lal Sing, her lover. 'In a transport of rage,' at some fancied neglect of his,

she seized a jug of water and sent it at his head. Old Mungala, hearing the row, and not knowing what it might proceed from, gave the alarm, and when the *ladies* of the household rushed in, they saw the Raja escaping across the terrace with his broken head. He was very melancholy that day, and could eat no food; they have, however, since made it all up. . . . Yesterday an Afghan stabbed a woman of the town in some dis-

pute, then a tailor who seized him, and then wounded himself. He is dead; the other two are not expected to live. . . . The Raja is more at home at such intrigues than other matters of public weal. No one in the Punjab will support him but the Maharani, and she, against her better judgment. He rubbed her all over with rose-water, so the 'Court Circular' tells me, on the day of the Dussehra. People have an idea here that the Raja is our creature. I have repeatedly told them the very words you use in your letter—namely, that we appointed him because the Rani selected him. I believe the Raja is more afraid of me than anyone, and yet I feel I can do little. . . . I attended Bhai Ram Sing's funeral yesterday, accompanying the body to the place of cremation. People say he has left fifty lacs of rupees, a large portion of which was conveyed to Benares previous to hostilities breaking out. It is usual on these occasions to wrap the body in Kashmere shawls, which are burnt with it. None of his wives or heirs would produce the necessary number, though it is said the Bhai has left many hundred; at last the Raja gave three, Dewan Moolraj one, and the family three old ones. So much for accumulating wealth at the expense of one's honour and honesty, that a man's greedy heirs may deny a trifle at the funeral! . . . The day Moolraj took his leave privately, he personally renewed the offer which he made through his vakil. I told him that Sahibs never took bribes or presents. This appeared to surprise him; and he asked me rather pointedly if none of us did so. I said, 'Not one in a hundred, and that one is not worth bribing; for, depend on it, he has neither influence nor character.' He seemed puzzled a good deal, and told me that he had, hitherto, had little to do with us, and that for the future he was our fast friend, and ready to do our bidding.

The general conclusion arrived at by John Lawrence, as the result of his daily interviews and of his acute observation, was not complimentary or reassuring, but it was true. 'There is not, in my judgment, the slightest trust to be placed in any person or any party here. There is an utter want of truth and honour in all; every man is ready to plot, to intrigue, to cabal against his neighbour—there is no oath and no bond which they will not take, and take in order to be the better able to deceive.'

While there were these chronic and ever-increasing causes for dissatisfaction in the Punjab proper, the iniquitous arrangement by which Kashmere and its ill-fated inhabitants were to be transferred without their consent, as though they were so many logs of wood, to Golab Sing, a Dogra Rajpoot, who had nothing in common with them, was not running smoothly, and, at one time, threatened to involve us in serious military operations. There was a feud of long

standing between Imamuddin, the existing ruler of Kashmere under the Lahore Durbar, and Golab Sing, whom we had practically bound ourselves to put in his place. Willing to give up so lucrative a post to no one, least of all to his private foe, and secretly encouraged, as we discovered shortly afterwards, by Lal Sing, who had been a party to the arrangement, Imamuddin refused to obey the orders of the Durbar, picked a quarrel with one of the chief officers who had been deputed to take over the country, killed him, and drove off his troops.

Incensed at the breach of the treaty, and fearing whereunto these things might grow, Lord Hardinge, through the medium of John Lawrence, called peremptorily on the Durbar to fulfil its obligations and drive out Imamuddin. The Durbar, at first, affected to disbelieve the story. They made excuses, and procrastinated as best they could. But John Lawrence was firm, and compelled them to do what was naturally so distasteful to them. 'Tej Sing,' he says, 'has been loth to march. I believe he is an arrant coward, and, but for us, would not move an inch. I went and comforted him, telling him he would gain a great name and our favour with very little trouble.'

At last, seven thousand Sikhs were collected together and crossed the Ravi under John's own eye.

I saw the last corps crossing early this morning (October 2). The Sikhs put their men over a river with greater facility than ours do. The men went readily enough, but I had to *drive* the Sirdars regularly out of the city. The men behaved exceedingly well. I had not the slightest trouble with them. The Sirdars behaved equally ill: a more wretched set of fellows I never saw. Runjore Sing and one or two others have not yet started; they are looking out for good omens, and I send a sowar twice a day to inquire whether they are propitious.

But the sight of military movements roused, as always, John's military instincts. The old ambition, repressed by his sister and by the force of circumstances, was still strong within him, and he threw out a feeler on the subject to his friend Currie :—

October 3.

If Government wish it, I should be delighted to go up to Sealkote or with Tej Sing. I should like nothing better. I wish I had the command; I would soon settle our friend the Sheikh. But Lord Hardinge may think that soldiering is not my business, and perhaps I cannot do

better than stay here and keep the Durbar in order. Nothing will be done by them without our constraining them to do it.

Meanwhile John Lawrence was reluctantly coming to the conviction that the Sheikh Imamuddin was, all the time, acting under secret instructions from Lahore; and if so, Lal Sing would, of course, do his best to thwart the expedition and even reverse its object. So it was arranged that Henry Lawrence should return from Simla, and, accompanying the Sikh army with a small force of his own, should endeavour to keep it up to the mark. Herbert Edwardes was to do the same with Golab Sing, who, as it seemed, was anxious to meet with opposition that he might have the better excuse for plundering his new subjects. We had, indeed, little reason to be proud of our nominee. 'Well known as he is, both in Jullundur and Lahore,' says John Lawrence, 'nobody has ever yet been heard to say a word in his favour.'—'He is the worst native I have ever come in contact with,' says Herbert Edwardes, who was closeted with him daily, 'a bad king, a miser, and a liar.'—'He is avaricious and cruel by nature,' says a third witness—who had the best opportunities of judging—'deliberately committing the most horrible atrocities for the purpose of investing his name with a horror which shall keep down all thoughts of resistance to his power.' Such was the man whom, as ill luck would have it, it was our business now to place by means of Sikh arms, against the wishes of the Sikhs, and, *à fortiori*, against the wishes of his hapless subjects that were to be, on the throne of the loveliest country in the world. And poor Henry Lawrence, who, from the most chivalrous but mistaken of motives, had been led into advocating the arrangement, often found himself very hard put to it to defend 'his friend Golab,' as John humorously calls him, from the candid criticisms of his best friends, and from the scruples of his own conscience. It was an unpalatable business enough, and the only consolation was that the Sheikh whom he was to displace was little better: 'ambition, pride, cruelty, and intrigue, strangely mixed up with indolence, effeminacy, voluptuousness, and timidity'—these were the chief characteristics, as drawn by one who knew him well, of Imamuddin. There was little indeed to choose between them. 'If Golab Sing flayed a chief alive,' says John Lawrence, 'Imamuddin boiled a Pundit to death: they are certainly a pair of amiables.'

The expedition, when it was once fairly launched under Henry Lawrence's guidance, went well enough. He knew that there was

treachery rampant behind him at Lahore, and that it was lurking among the troops who accompanied him. But a whisper in the ear of Lal Sing's vakil, that, if aught happened to him, his brother John, whose force of character Lal knew too well, would immediately occupy the fort, put Lal Sing himself into confinement, and seize the person of the young Maharaja, removed all danger from that quarter. Henry Lawrence's own force of will and energy did the rest. Imamuddin surrendered at the very moment when the Sikh troops who had been sent against him were debating whether they should not go over to his side, and all parties returned amicably to Lahore, where the Sheikh, who had not presented any balance-sheet for years, was to give an account of his stewardship, to pay up and disband his troops, and to justify his hostile acts. Willing to act on Lal Sing's instructions while it suited his own purposes to do so, Imamuddin had no intention of suffering for him in silence, and on the way down to Lahore he produced the secret orders on which he had, all along, been acting.

The real offender, the Regent Lal Sing, was now, on December 2, brought to trial before his own ministers and the leading Sirdars, in the presence of five British Commissioners—Sir Frederick Currie, Sir John Littler, Colonel Goldie, and the two Lawrences. It was a great state trial, striking enough in its antecedents, its surroundings, and its results. The production in court of the papers signed by Lal Sing himself, his lame denials, his condemnation by his own ministers, his solemn deposition, the outburst of grief on the part of the Maharani when she learned that she was to part for ever not only with her vizier but her lover, the departure of Lal Sing as a prisoner from the tent which he had entered as a prince, and his removal, without a drop of bloodshed or a symptom of a riot, from the Sikh capital to the British frontier station of Ferozepore,—these were some of the sensational incidents in the trial.

But the consequences were even more remarkable. For the council of eight Sirdars who assumed the government in Lal Sing's place, when they found that we were determined to leave the country, unless our control was to be complete—in other words, unless the whole administration of the Punjab was submitted to the supervision of the British Resident, who was to act through the Durbar, and when the young Maharaja came of age was to restore to it its absolute independence—the whole body of Sirdars and 'pillars of the state,' fifty-one in number, came, and, without one dissentient voice,

implored us to remain on our own terms. And thus, by the treaty of Byrowal, in accordance with the wishes of the chiefs themselves, and the assent, however grudgingly given, of the Queen-mother, Henry Lawrence found himself installed for eight years the supreme ruler of the Punjab.

The new arrangement gave him something like free scope for his energy and philanthropy. Hitherto, he had been bound hand and foot, and could only offer advice to those who had stopped their ears, or could do so, if the advice given was unpleasant. Henceforward, he was invested by treaty 'with an unlimited authority' in every department of the state, and he, forthwith, drew around him a band of assistants who were united to him by bonds of personal attachment and sympathy, the like to which has never been seen in India. The names of George Lawrence, Herbert Edwardes, John Nicholson, Edward Lake, James Abbott, Arthur Cocks, Lewin Bowring, Harry Lumsden, Reynell Taylor, George Macgregor, Richard Pollock, and John Becher, have, every one of them, become more or less historical, and most of them will occur repeatedly in the course of this biography. They worked now with a will, under Henry Lawrence, to remedy the worst abuses of the Sikh administration, in the generous hope that the last extremity of annexation might be avoided. They worked with equal devotion when that annexation had become an accomplished fact, and when their beloved chief had become the head of the Punjab Board of Administration. When the Board was broken up, recruited by a goodly number of men who were almost as much attracted by the widely different gifts of the younger, as they themselves had been by those of the elder brother, they worked on, with undiminished zeal, under John Lawrence, as Chief Commissioner. When the mutiny broke out they were still to stand shoulder to shoulder—if such a phrase may be used of men who were hundreds of miles apart, and who rarely looked upon a white face—were to carry on the administration of the province as if it were in a time of profound peace, and to furnish the means of crushing the danger far beyond its limits. And, once more, they have ruled since then, in one shape or another, in the most widely scattered posts and with the most signal success, nearly the whole of India.

The treaty of Byrowal, which gave Henry Lawrence so splendid a position, enabled his brother John to return at length to his proper charge in the Jullundur Doab. Moved by affection for his brother, and by his public spirit, he had, for nine long months, cut himself off

from his wife and family, and, during five of them—from August to December—had thrown himself ungrudgingly into the work at Lahore. A domestic event of much interest had occurred during his absence, in the birth, at Simla, on October 1, 1846, of his eldest son John. His enforced absence from his wife at such a time was a great trial to him, and, apart from this, he had been chafing under the restraints and the hopelessness of the task imposed upon him; all the more so, because he was conscious that his assistants at Jullundur, being new to their work, could not, with all their zeal, be equal to duties which would have taxed the abilities of the most experienced heads in the North-West.

Lahore is not a satisfactory place (he had written to Currie as far back as November 4); I shall not be sorry when I am allowed to leave it. Pray let me know if I may return to the Jullundur when the Sheikh is well in hand, and my brother comes back. I am ready to do what Government wants, but, personally, I prefer my work there. It is a new country, and my assistants need looking after; and I want to put my stamp on it, that in after times people may look back and recall my Raj with satisfaction. No portion of our Empire promises better than it does.

It was a bold wish, or rather a prophecy: one of those pregnant prophecies which, when uttered by such a man, tend to bring about their own fulfilment. It was fulfilled, not in the Jullundur Doab alone, where, within two years of the time when the words were written, John Lawrence found that, while war was raging in all other parts of the Punjab, he was able to preserve almost unbroken peace; nor, again, in the wider field of the Punjab alone, where his name is still *the* name which stands absolutely by itself as a ruling power among the natives,—but, in its measure also over the whole of India. Almost as I write these words (May 21, 1880) I see, quoted in the 'Times,' the letters of several Indian Rajas, who, though they were unconnected with any of the provinces directly ruled by him, send their contributions to the 'Lawrence Memorial Fund,' accompanied by glowing tributes to his worth. One of them—the Raja Sheoraj Sing of Kashipore—uses these memorable words: 'We have learned with deep regret the lamentable death of Lord Lawrence, the ablest and wisest of the rulers India ever had. His impartial justice and wise administration are so deeply impressed on our hearts that they can scarcely be effaced. It must be our duty, therefore, to pay our tribute of honour to the memory of so eminent a statesmen, who

restored peace to our country and happiness to its people in one of its most critical moments, and strengthened the ties of the union of England with India by the display of unparalleled wisdom, foresight, justice, and courage.' Was ever the wish of a young man that he might 'put his stamp on the country,' and that 'the natives might in after times look back upon his Raj with satisfaction' more abundantly, more triumphantly, realised?

When John Lawrence got back to Jullundur he found the settlement of the revenue actively progressing under the supervision of George Christian, a young man on whom he had cast a covetous eye at Lahore as one capable of great things. The first notice of him I find in the papers before me is at the time when Imamuddin had just surrendered and was returning amicably with us—too amicably, as Christian thought—to Lahore, and is highly characteristic of the writer. 'Christian,' says John Lawrence, 'is going about asking, "Is no one to be hanged?" and seems melancholy that echo answers, "No one."' And the advice John Lawrence gives him before entering on his settlement work is even more characteristic: 'I expect to be in Jullundur by December at the latest, but should I not, mind you assess low; if you don't I shall be your enemy for life; and indeed, what is worse, you will be your own. Let nothing tempt you to assess high.' George Barnes, another very able officer, whose Report on Kangra I have already quoted, was appointed, at the same time, to the revenue settlement in that district, while Cust and Lake and Hercules Scott were rapidly losing the only reproach which could fairly be levelled at them—the only reproach which is sure always to mend itself—that of youth and inexperience.

But John Lawrence now found himself face to face with the great difficulty which was to meet him again in the Punjab—the treatment of the feudatories of the dispossessed government. What was the question, and how did he deal with it? It will be well to make the case as clear as possible at once, and to put it, as nearly as may be, in John Lawrence's own words.

Most of the land in the Jullundur Doab, as in other parts of the Punjab, was held by jagheerdars, or feudatories, of the Sikh conquerors who had ousted the Mogul. The whole territory had been ceded by the treaty of Umritsur to the British Government, and it was within our right as conquerors, due regard being had to justice and policy, to deal with it as we thought best. It was, of course, necessary that the province should pay the cost of its occupation and

management, and the question now was how this end could be best secured. It was impossible to increase the land tax, the great source of revenue in India, for its incidence was already too heavy for the scanty means of the masses. In fact, we had already largely reduced it. There seemed therefore to be only one course open to us, and that was to reduce the holdings of the feudatories. Most of them had held their fiefs on condition of military or general, or sometimes, of religious, service. All need for such arrangements had now gone by, and John Lawrence used to reply with somewhat brusque frankness to petitions which pleaded for the retention of their privileges: 'We want neither your soldiers nor your prayers, and cannot afford to pay you for them.' Accordingly, all these services were commuted into a money payment; the fiefs were proportionately reduced and the remainder maintained—the older grants in perpetuity to male heirs, the more recent grants for the lives of the parties who were in possession.

Some hardship was, undoubtedly, inflicted and some ill-feeling generated by these measures, and it is much to be regretted that it was so. But it is equally certain that there was nothing essentially unjust in them, still less anything unjust according to native ideas. No native dynasty ever succeeded another without making short work of its predecessor's grants. Above all, it is clear that the change was absolutely necessary in the interest of the masses. The country—and by the country it must always be remembered I mean the whole bulk of its population, each one of whom, if you prick him, must needs bleed—could not afford to pay for two systems of government—one our own, based on regular establishments and money payments; the other based on feudal service supported by large territorial possessions. All these feudatories, although many of them were actually holding fiefs on our side of the Sutlej and were under our protection, had joined the Sikh army when it invaded our territory in quest of new acquisitions. If it was fair to deprive the Punjab Government of a large tract of country, for having invaded British territory, it was equally fair that its feudatories should bear their share of the consequences. Our mode of dealing with them was certainly more liberal than any which they themselves would have meted out to a people whom they had conquered. In particular, it was much more liberal than that with which Runjeet Sing himself had treated the chiefs of the Punjab plains whom he had subdued. In any case, our measures were justified by success. The great feudatories sub-

mitted, as a body, to their altered circumstances, without opposition and with a good grace, and, what is more remarkable, though treated with less indulgence than the chiefs of the adjoining hills, and though urged by them to rise against us in the second Sikh war, with one single exception, they all refused to do so. And this one exception only served to prove the rule, for it was that of the Bedi Bikrama Sing, the high priest of the Sikhs and the special patron of female infanticide!

But as this matter is important, and as the difference of opinion upon it between the elder and the younger brother was ultimately to become so vital, John Lawrence shall put his case in his own words. Here is a letter to Sir Frederick Currie, dated October 17, 1846, which indicates his view in a narrow compass :—

I am anxious for your opinion on the following point. There are some five hundred villages in the Jullundur, worth about five lacs of rupees, which were conquered by different Sikh chiefs seventy or eighty years ago. In some cases, three or four, or even more, villages are held by one or two persons; in others, there are from five to thirty and forty shareholders. I propose to recommend to Government that the possession in all these cases be affirmed merely for life, and the shares lapse to Government on the demise of each occupant. My brother thinks we ought to maintain them for ever, subject to a certain payment. What do you say? These are not private properties, but alienations of the Government rights. They won them by the strong hand; they have now forfeited them by the same law by which they held them, namely, that of the sword. Why should we give up the Government right? I see no policy in so doing; politically, these people will never support us, and to the country they are a perfect incubus. Why not let them gradually fall in, and let the descendants of these conquerors return to the plough whence their fathers came? What increases the difficulty is, that by the Hindu law of inheritance these lands will be divided into infinitesimal portions gradually, and as the occupants are not proprietors, they will not become petty yeomen cultivating their own lands, but beggarly gentlemen, too proud to work and unwilling to starve. You cannot remedy this by entailing the property on the eldest son, for, in that case, where you please one, you put up the backs of ten, besides going against custom and precedent. Runjeet Sing was gradually getting rid of all these feudal lords. If you think that the heirs have rights, why not allow them so many years' purchase for their rights directly the division comes below one village?

Hard as was John Lawrence's work in the Trans-Sutlej States, he by no means wished to lessen it; and, hearing that it was proposed by Government to lessen that of his brother Commissioner, Colonel

Mackeson, in the Cis-Sutlej States, by appointing a sessions judge, who would take the civil cases off his hands, he wrote to Elliot, Secretary to Government, protesting vigorously against a project—the separation of the civil from the revenue work—which he believed to be fraught with serious consequences to India :—

I want no such personage as a sessions judge here. I have not a bit too much work, though I have plenty of it. I have a great objection to the civil and revenue work being separated. A regular civil court plays the very devil. Its course of procedure is ruinous to the tenures of the country, for the agriculturists cannot fight their causes in that court. It is ruining the people in the North-West Provinces, and will do the same wherever it is introduced. We are getting on capitally here. This, I think, will prove the pattern district of the North-West, and will pay Government famously if you do not let off too many jagheers.

In July 1847, John Lawrence came down to Jullundur to hold these same sessions and appeal courts, and it was while he was engaged in this work, in a building which lay at some distance from the city and treasury, that a 'cow riot' occurred, which must have brought vividly back to his mind one of the most striking incidents of his early career. The Hindus, who, under Sikh rule, had been accustomed to a system of strict protection for their sacred animal, came in great numbers to the court-house in which Hercules Scott, the Assistant-Commissioner, was presiding, to protest against the orders which had recently been issued allowing cows to be slaughtered for food. Scott refused to interfere, whereupon some fifteen hundred of them rushed excitedly to the Commissioner's court, surrounded the house, and, when John Lawrence told them that the order was the Governor-General's and could not be rescinded, they broke out into open violence. His servants were attacked and beaten, fifteen mounted sowars who attempted to disperse them were pulled off their horses, and John Lawrence himself, on coming out, was pelted with stones. He ordered up a company of sepoys from the civil treasury, and their soubadar, seeing a dense and excited mob gathered around the house, while the troopers were being mauled and the lives of the Europeans were in danger, halted his men and gave the order to 'fix bagnets!' The sound was too much for the malcontents. They broke and fled, and the danger was over. In revenge, —to make the parallel with John Lawrence's earlier experience more complete—they closed all the shops in the bazaar and suspended business for some weeks. But no further harm came of it, nor was

it necessary here for John Lawrence, as he had done on the previous occasion, to act the part of purveyor-general.

The time passed away pleasantly enough with John Lawrence, as he saw his work in the Jullundur Doab growing under his hand. But, in August, he was obliged to leave it again and go on the same thankless errand to Lahore. The strain of the work in the Punjab, with the full powers which now belonged to him, had been too much for the ever active, yet, long since, overwrought, frame of Henry Lawrence. Supported by his able assistants, and stimulated by the field for usefulness which the new powers committed to him had seemed to open up, he had thrown himself, during the last seven months,—three of them the hottest in the year—with headlong ardour into his work. To reduce the overgrown army, which before the Sutlej campaign had been 85,000 strong, to the moderate number of some 20,000; to secure for the discharged soldiers their arrears of pay and induce them to return to peaceful avocations; to subject those who remained to strict discipline and yet, by paying them punctually, to make them contented with their lot; to strike off the most obnoxious taxes, and moderate and equalise those which were retained; to compel the tax-gatherers of the Khalsa, the 'official locusts' of the land, to disgorge their ill-gotten gains, and to ensure that the money paid in to them, in future, should reach the public treasury; to introduce a very simple penal code which should be adapted to the wants and to the intelligence of the people,—these were some of the objects which Henry Lawrence put before himself, and which he had already done something towards securing. In order to prepare the way for this code, he had summoned to Lahore, just before his health gave way, fifty Sikh heads of villages, who, after sitting there in solemn conclave for some months, were to reduce the unwritten customs and morals of the people to a written law, which was at once to reform and perpetuate them.[1]

The 'unlimited authority' given to Henry Lawrence by treaty, of course he had found, in practice, to be limited enough. For it was a part of the programme to work as far as possible through the Durbar, almost every member of whom, as he would have himself admitted, was alike venal and selfish, while the Queen-mother, who had, from the first, chafed at the interference of the British, was not likely to be more friendly now that they had torn away her lover

[1] Kaye's *Sketches of English Officers*, vol. ii. p. 297.

from her. This 'Hindu Messalina,' as Lord Hardinge and Herbert Edwardes, justly or unjustly, call her, soon indeed consoled herself for the loss of an old favourite by finding new ones, and it was not long before her slave girl, Mungala, was detected carrying treasonable messages to Lal Sing and to Moolraj, the powerful and semi-independent ruler of Mooltan. At last, she put the finishing stroke to her iniquities by managing to insult the Resident, the Ministers, and the whole Durbar, at once. It had been arranged that a grand Durbar should be held at which Tej Sing, the President of the Council, was to be installed as Raja of Sealkote, while sundry decorations were to be bestowed on other deserving Sirdars. The astrologers were duly consulted, the auspicious day was fixed, and all the chivalry of the moribund Khalsa were assembled to take part in the ceremonial. But when Tej Sing knelt before the youthful Maharaja to receive the saffron spot on the forehead which was to dub him a Raja, 'the little prince proudly folded his arms in token of refusal, and flung himself back on his velvet chair with a tutored obstinacy which was not to be shaken.' [1]

Such an insult was too great to be put up with; and Henry Lawrence, knowing well that the Maharani had been, throughout, intriguing against his authority, with the full assent and consent of the Durbar, decreed the separation of the boy King from his unscrupulous mother. She stormed and raved and scratched in vain, and was despatched in a dhoolie to Shikarpore, twenty miles away, with no greater difficulty than Lal Sing had been removed before her. Here she became the focus of ever fresh and more formidable intrigues, and fresh measures of precaution had to be taken against her. About the time of the second Sikh war, she was transferred to Benares, where, having changed her dress with a sempstress, she escaped to Nepal, and thence, after many vicissitudes, to England.

The removal of the Queen-mother from Lahore was one of the last acts of Henry Lawrence as Resident. His health failed him, and in August he left for Simla, only returning, in November, for a passing visit, on his way to England. One of the most important and, very possibly, the happiest chapter of his life was now closed. He had found at Lahore full scope for all his vigour. He had had that variety and multiplicity of occupation and interests which were as the breath of life to him. Of a sanguine temperament, he was buoyed up by the

[1] Arnold's *Administration of Lord Dalhousie*, vol. i. p. 51.

hope of saving a native state whose history appealed to many of his finer sympathies and instincts, and of stemming the tide of annexation which was, so soon, to swallow up so many of the independent principalities of India. He had been compelled to deal with no burning questions of state policy, such as were to confront him when he returned from England to a post of still greater dignity and importance, the Presidency of the Board of Administration of the province which, in spite of all his generous efforts, it had been found necessary to annex. His work had been one of pure philanthropy, in which it was hardly possible for honourable and intelligent men to differ widely. He had been surrounded by a band of assistants, 'every one of whom was his friend, and most of whom had been introduced into the Punjab by him,' and shared with him all his views and sympathies. More than this, he had had the help, whenever it was required, of his brother John, a man whose arm was as strong as his mind was massive and methodical, and his spirit willing and self-sacrificing. 'Each of my assistants,' says Henry Lawrence, 'was a good man. The most were excellent officers. My chief help, however, was in my brother John, without whom I must have had difficulty in carrying on. On three different occasions, during my temporary absence, he took charge for me. . . . In various ways he was most useful, and gave me always such help as only a brother could.'

This is an acknowledgment as frank as it is generous; and it is well to call pointed attention to it, for some of the more thorough-going partisans of Henry—and no man ever had the gift of binding his followers to him by ties of more enthusiastic loyalty, and so, as it were, of forcing them to be thorough-going partisans, than he—have complained that John, in his successful administration of the Punjab, reaped the fruits of that which he had had little share in sowing. Such was certainly, as this letter shows, *not* the opinion of Henry Lawrence himself.

Compared with such thorough-going partisans, it has been said with equal wit and truth that John was a staunch Henry-ite, and Henry a staunch John-ite. The disciples have gone far beyond the master, as there have been Lutherans who have gone far beyond Luther, and as the Paulicians have gone far beyond and stultified St. Paul. In the matter of time alone, out of the period of some two years which elapsed between the treaty of Umritsur in March 1846, and the outbreak at Mooltan, in April 1848, it should be remarked that, while Henry was residing at Lahore for some ten months only, John was

residing there and officiating for him for not less than fourteen ; while, as regards the work which he managed to get through, the letters which I have already quoted will give sufficient evidence. The two brothers, it is true enough, differed from each other, as men of such different temperaments are sure to do, on one or two important and upon several minor matters of policy ; but they were, in no sense, rivals, in no sense, jealous of each other. Neither of them ever tried to steal a march upon the other. They were fairly matched in energy, in ability, and in self-devotion ; and those who would detract from the one in order to exalt the other, would do what would have been equally distasteful to both.

Finally, that we may estimate aright the happiness of Henry during this, as compared with the next and better-known period in his life, it must be remembered that he had been working, as Resident, under a chief who was thoroughly congenial to him, a chief as chivalrous, as high-minded, and as philanthropic as he was himself, one who wrote to him and to whom he wrote—as a large budget of correspondence in my hands shows—with all the freedom and affection of a brother. When he returned, things were to be widely different. For Lord Dalhousie and he were to be as antagonistic to each other as two great and high-principled men could well be. The one was to jar upon the other to an extent which was to be fatal to the peace of mind of the more sensitive and delicate nature. What Henry Lawrence thought of Lord Hardinge has been put on record by Henry Lawrence himself in an elaborate essay on his administration, and is preserved in the edition of his collected essays. What Lord Hardinge thought of Henry Lawrence is evident from the feeling which was pretty general throughout India, that the Governor-General was too much under his influence. It was remarked that he had planted a 'triumvirate of Lawrences' beyond the frontiers of British India, and was pretty much ruled by one of them within them. Lord Hardinge pressed his friend to accompany him to England, and, while on his way thither, wrote thus, on his behalf, to Sir John Hobhouse, the President of the Board of Control :—

My dear Sir John,—I am anxious to say a few words to you on a subject which you formerly received with favour. I allude to the distinction of K.C.B. for Colonel Lawrence. I have no objects to urge as regards myself, and his claims are so strong and so just that, even if I had, I should wish his to take the precedence. I should be most happy if, on his return to England, he could be rewarded by this mark of Her

Majesty's favour. Since the war closed, early in 1846, his labours have been incessant and most successful. His personal energies, his moral force of character, were admirably displayed by leading the Sikh forces into the Kashmere passes in the autumn of 1846—a force scarcely recovered from mutiny to their own government and hostility to us; and he has, since the treaty, as you know, administered the government of the Punjab with great ability and complete success. This is the last act of conscientious duty towards a most deserving officer; and there is no one of the many officers whom I have left behind me in India who has such good pretensions to the favour of Government as my good friend Colonel Lawrence, and there is nothing which you can do for me which will give me more pleasure than to see him honoured as he deserves.

This appeal, it need scarcely be added, was favourably listened to, and, within a month of his landing in England, Henry Lawrence received, amidst general acclamation, the distinction he had so well earned, and which his kind friend Hudlestone had prognosticated for him from the very beginning of his Indian career, when he told his sister that 'all her brothers would be sure to do well, but as for Henry, he would be Sir Henry Lawrence before he died.'

CHAPTER X.

THE SECOND SIKH WAR. 1848.

THE second prolonged residence of John Lawrence, while acting for his brother at Lahore, may be dismissed with greater brevity than the first; for the picture which I have endeavoured to draw of the one may, *mutatis mutandis*, serve for the other also. The banishment of Lal Sing and of the Queen-mother had removed some of the chief causes of anxiety. But the more chronic difficulties, the venality and the selfishness, the intrigues and the empty exchequer of the Sirdars, through whom the Resident was bound to work, were the same as ever. They offered a passive resistance to the, possibly, over-active efforts which were made to improve them in European fashion; and it was more difficult for a man of John Lawrence's temperament to submit with equanimity to such passive resistance than to any amount of active opposition. He found, no doubt, in the full powers conferred on him by treaty, a wider field of usefulness than had been open to him before; and of these, with the help of his brother's assistants who traversed the country, making a summary assessment and endeavouring to eradicate the three great social evils of suttee, female infanticide, and slavery, he availed himself to the full. The security with which these young Englishmen rode about, quite alone, on their errands of mercy, seems strange enough when we recollect the frequent revolutions which had taken place since the death of Runjeet Sing.

But, notwithstanding these encouragements, there were circumstances attending John Lawrence's second residence at Lahore which rendered it even more distasteful to him than his former one. He was asked to hold the post, not directly for his brother, as Henry Lawrence had himself desired, but for Frederick Currie, who, at some future time not named, was to step in and take it out of his hands. Currie had already been provided with a seat in Council at Calcutta; he knew little of the Punjab, while Lawrence knew it well; the Sirdars

themselves, moreover, who had, at first, been somewhat nettled by the home truths and blunt directness of John, had now come to appreciate the ready humour, the unrestrained intercourse, and the kindly heart which accompanied and set them off. 'The Durbar,' he writes to his brother, 'are very melancholy about my going away. Old Tej Sing asked me if he could not get a year's leave; even Dena Nath does not like the change; and I am sure I can be no favourite of his Yesterday, while talking to me, he said that things would never go on. "With you," he said, "we can talk and badger and dispute; you are one of our own; but what can we do with Currie Sahib?"' That which made the arrangement proposed by Lord Hardinge all the more unaccountable was that Currie himself did not like it, and thought that he was coming down merely 'to oblige the Lawrences.' There was some soreness on both sides; but any lingering feeling of the kind in the breast of John must have been removed by the cordiality of their meeting when, at last, Currie arrived, and by the letter written to him by Lord Hardinge just before he set out for England :—

Off the Sandheads: January 20, 1848.

My dear Lawrence,—Our pilot leaves in an hour, and this, my last letter from the shores of Bengal, is written to express to you the gratification which I feel that you and your brothers, Henry and George Lawrence, have so greatly exceeded all the expectations I had formed originally of your abilities and judgment. I have acknowledged my sense of your valuable services before I relinquished office, and I have recommended that you should be employed either in Kashmere this year, or Oudh the next, or at Lahore, in the event of Currie's returning to Calcutta before your brother's health enables him to resume the government of the Punjab. I mention these points, of which your brother has probably apprised you; for the decisions in the Lahore arrangements, apparently adverse to your interests, have been made to accomplish more objects than those which meet the eye. . . . Your brother is, assuredly, much better than he was last year in the cold season at Lahore. If any military vacancy should occur in the Council, I think not merely that he ought, but that he will be the successor to Littler, and his presence in London will forward all these just objects of well-merited ambition. He only wants health to be at the top of the tree, and I don't think there is anything organically wrong.

Ever, my dear Lawrence,
Yours sincerely,
HARDINGE.

But I am anticipating. Soon after the arrival of John Lawrence,

in the previous autumn, at Lahore, the Council of Sikh chiefs, with its president, the Dewan Dena Nath, at their head, came to him, and premising that Lord Hardinge was a 'real father' to the Maharaja and to the State generally, asked him, with true filial confidence, to remit the whole sum of money which they had agreed to pay towards the expenses of the British occupation. They could give us no money, they said, for there was none to give. John Lawrence replied bluntly that this would not do; that the revenue, if applied with justice and economy, was ample to meet all demands on the State; and, going straight to the root of the matter with the directness which was characteristic of him, he wrote to his brother, proposing that, with a view to warding off financial ruin, the kardars, or tax-gatherers, should be obliged by the Resident to give in their accounts punctually, and, what was more important still, that, without the Resident's signature, there should be no expenditure of money at all.

I know that you are anxious to work through the Council themselves as much as possible, and, no doubt, this is a right principle if it can be done. But I much doubt if it will not be necessary to interfere with details more than we have hitherto done. I think I see my way clearly and know what I would do. You may not have the same views, and I am, at any rate, only a bird of passage. I will therefore interfere as much or as little as may be thought desirable, and either allow things to go on much as they have done, or stir the Durbar up. I shall not write publicly or privately to Government on the subject. You will do whatever you think necessary. Sheikh Imamuddin's cash arrived from Jullundur to-day. It is the only money in the Treasury.

This proposal, carefully guarded though it was, brought down on him, as he expected, a sharp rebuke from his brother, who could never be brought to see the fundamental importance, from a statesman's point of view, of a clear balance-sheet; while, in reply, John pointed out that it was the only chance of warding off—that which each deprecated equally—the last extremity of annexation.

One of the assistants to the Residency, Lewin Bowring, afterwards highly distinguished as Chief Commissioner of Mysore, has furnished me with some lively reminiscences of his chief during this period:—

John Lawrence (he says) was very brusque of speech in those early days; and what I can best remember of them would develop the rougher rather than the gentler side of his character. He used, with a merry twinkle of his eye, to say very sharp things to the Punjab chiefs, under which they winced, although he was half in fun. He certainly had what

is called a rough-tongue then, and the Sirdars had a wholesome dread of him. Yet, in spite of his curtness of speech, he was so popular with us, his assistants, that there was almost a mutiny among us when we heard that Sir Frederick Currie was to be sent up to take the place of Sir Henry, in supersession of his brother John, in whom we had unbounded confidence. John had been assisting Henry, during a temporary absence, in his arduous duties, and had taken immense trouble in producing order out of chaos. He was a far abler man at details than his brother, though less considerate, perhaps, towards the Sikh chiefs. He introduced a summary settlement of the land revenue, which was, at the time, in a most disorganised state, accomplished many judicial reforms, and devised a system analogous to our penny postage, which was of great benefit. In his endeavours to reduce expenditure he insisted on all orders for disbursing money being brought to him for counter-signature, a proceeding to which the Durbar greatly objected, and, perhaps, not without some reason, as it was virtually the assumption of the highest power in the State.

When Rai Bhaj Sing, the Vakil of the Durbar, came to him in the morning with papers for signature, he would say to him, 'Well, Bhaj Sing, *aj kya naya dagha hai?*' ('What new roguery is there to-day?') And in Durbar he was wont to *tutoyer* the chiefs, and omit all well-turned complimentary phrases, to the great horror of the courtly Noor-ood-deen, one of the members of Council. The Durbar, though they had a great respect for his force of character, did not regard him with as much affection as they did his brother. He was unpretentious in his habits, and used to sit in his room with his shirt-sleeves turned up over his arms and a cigar in his mouth, dictating orders to a native scribe, who, squatting on the ground, read out papers to him, while his wife sat close by, doing some needle-work. We all liked his plain unassuming manner, even though his blunt speaking may, at times, have given offence to those who were sensitive; for we all felt that he was a man of commanding powers. Even in those days, he must have been conscious of great capacity to rule, as I remember his saying, one day, that he would undertake to govern Ireland, which was then passing through a dangerous crisis, with success. He said this not in a boasting way, but, as he always spoke, with perfect simplicity.

The difficulties and annoyances of John's public duties at Lahore were not lessened by the presence of any extra comforts in his domestic life. Neither at that, nor at any other period of their lives, did the Lawrence brothers care much for the luxuries or refinements of civilisation. At the Residency house there were very few of the comforts, and not an abundant supply even of what are commonly considered to be the necessaries, of life. Henry was as careless as John of appearances, and was even more unconscious of his sur-

roundings. The one candle that lighted, or failed to light, the tent in which he and his wife and an assistant would be working at night, was, as I have been told by an eye-witness, placed, not in a candlestick, but in the neck of an empty beer-bottle; and, on one occasion, when a second candle was wanted for the variety of occupations which were going on, Henry, with the utmost simplicity, remarked that some one must first drink another bottle of beer! A curious commentary this on the 'gorgeous East,' but one which, peradventure, the great Puritan poet himself would have been among the first to appreciate. In his lavish hospitality, Henry Lawrence would often ask more people to dinner than by any possibility he had room for, and then, as likely as not, would forget to order the dinner for them. And sometimes a provident friend, who made it his business to look after his chief's interests, would inquire privately whether the dinner had been ordered, or endeavour to supply any deficiencies, surreptitiously, from his own table.

When John Lawrence took his brother's place at the Residency, there was much more forethought, but there was still little that could be called comfort. His wife and family indeed were with him, a boon of which he had been deprived during nine months of the year 1846, and five of the year 1847. But the house which had sufficed for the ample hospitalities and the simple wants of the Lawrence brothers, and had often given shelter, in patriarchal fashion, to a goodly band of assistants as well, was not found to be large enough for Currie, who had been designated as their successor. The discomforts of building were thus added to those which were inherent in the place and in the work, and one or two details of the domestic arrangements, which I gather from John Lawrence's letters, may, perchance, not be without their interest to another and more exacting generation. John Lawrence and his wife, his three children, and a European servant, had only two rooms, twelve feet by fifteen, to divide between them. Henry Lawrence and Robert Napier, now Lord Napier of Magdala, shared a third; while the 'assistants' were lucky enough if they fared as did their chiefs, and had half a room apiece! Such was the mode of life, and such the school in which some of the best and greatest of our Indian administrators were trained. The details may seem trivial, but they have an interest and importance of their own. For it was here that,—following the example set them by the two brothers, the two master-spirits of Henry and John Lawrence,—a whole band of men learned lessons of simplicity and of contentment, of absorption

in their work, and of sympathy with the natives, which they were never afterwards to unlearn, and which may still be said to be a real power in India. It was from such materials, and under such influences, that one of the noblest portions of the great fabric of our Indian Empire was being built up—an Empire as majestic as that of Rome, and ruled, on the whole, with a beneficence of purpose towards its subject races of which few Romans ever dreamed.

> Hanc olim veteres vitam coluere Sabini,
> Hanc *Remus et frater*; sic fortis Etruria crevit,
> Scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma.

One friendship formed by John Lawrence during this visit to Lahore, and never afterwards interrupted, should be noticed here. Under the peculiar conditions of our occupation of the Punjab, Lahore was the most important military station in India. Sir John Littler, one of our best generals, was in command of the Division, and when Colin Campbell—the famous soldier who had played his part in the retreat to Corunna, had fought at Vittoria, had led the forlorn hope and bled at San Sebastian—was retiring from the scene of military operations in China, at the head of his splendid 98th Regiment, Lord Hardinge determined to secure his services also for the post of danger, and gave him the command of a brigade at Lahore. Here he became a fast friend, first of Henry, and then of John Lawrence. 'I am delighted,' he says in his 'Diary,' 'at the prospect of John Lawrence's remaining at Lahore during his brother's absence.' He frequently accompanied John during his shooting excursions—an amusement in which the civilian was, from long practice, much more at home than the soldier. John Lawrence was an excellent shot. I have been told by his friends that he would kill a jackal with a pistol from his buggy as he was driving by; while Colin Campbell regretfully confesses that 'he could not touch a feather from the back of an elephant.' No one of the Lahore officials was more grieved than he, on both public and private grounds, when it was determined that John Lawrence was to give place to Currie. 'I am most sorry,' he says, 'that John Lawrence is going. He is not only a nice' (one of Colin Campbell's highest terms of praise, as his biography shows), 'friendly, and honest fellow, but he is the sort of political authority with whom I should like to have to act if any disturbance were to arise during our stay in the Punjab.'[1]

[1] *Life of Lord Clyde*, by General Shadwell, vol. i. pp. 148, 159.

Lord Dalhousie, the new Governor-General, on his arrival in India on January 12, 1848, was received with the usual honours at Government House, and, in the following week, Lord Hardinge sailed for England, accompanied by Henry Lawrence, after assuring his successor that, so far as he could see, 'it would not be necessary to fire a gun in India for seven years to come!' But, still, Currie came not to Lahore, and still, John Lawrence worked on cheerfully, though he was anything but satisfied with his position there. 'I hope,' he had written to his successor-designate on November 21, 'that you will come as soon as you can conveniently do so. As far as I am concerned, the sooner I am out of the Punjab the better I shall be pleased.' But the following February still found him in harness in the Punjab, and when, at last, he heard that Currie was actually on his way, he wrote to his brother Henry, offering, with his usual unselfishness, to return to Lahore at any time rather than bring him back from England before his health was re-established.

> As I said before, sooner than bring you out before your time, I will come back here again, if necessary. But I would much rather that Currie stayed the whole time. These frequent changes are a great evil. No man has time to carry out his plans, and therefore to do much good. . . . It was bad enough when either my own reputation or yours was concerned. But it is worse now; for no one likes being made a mere warming-pan of. Government has just written to me to do nothing about Mooltan till Currie comes. Thus six weeks are lost. In two months I would have assessed all Mooltan. Men sent there in the middle of March will only lose their health, going about, and not accomplish the work in double the time.

These words, as we shall hereafter see, have an immediate bearing on events which were destined to set the Punjab in a flame, and to lead to the annexation of the whole country. Had John Lawrence been allowed to have his way in the matter he would have sent Arthur Cocks to Mooltan in January, and the second Sikh war, with its unaccountable blunderings and Cadmean victories, might, possibly, have never taken place at all.

The long-expected Resident arrived on March 6, and he and John Lawrence, in spite of previous heart-burnings, got on capitally together. They discussed all the pressing questions and arrived at a thorough accord. The new buildings had been completed and the 'assistants,' with two exceptions, were cleared out to Mean Meer. The patriarchal period at the Residency had now passed away for ever.

'Whereas in your and my time,' says John to his brother, 'there was neither privacy nor comfort, there will now probably be too much of both.' On March 17, 'St. Patrick's Day,'—as his father, with, possibly, awakened memories of his lineage and his youthful escapades, remarks with satisfaction,—a second son, Henry, was born; and on April 3, the whole Lawrence family, with the baby, which was then little more than a fortnight old, started for Jullundur, 'right glad to go.'

John Lawrence, after making a rapid tour through his province, reached in safety the beautiful hill station of Dhurmsala, where he had bought a house. The prospect of spending a few weeks in that cool climate, with only an occasional visit to the plains when it might be necessary to hold the sessions, seemed too delightful to be true. And, unfortunately, it was too delightful to be true. For, before many days had passed, news came that Vans Agnew and Anderson, the two officers who had been deputed to Mooltan, had been foully murdered, and that the Government was in the dilemma which John Lawrence had foreseen, and had, in vain, tried to avert. We must either now enter, at once, on military movements which might land us in a general war in the middle of the hot season, and at the hottest place in India; or, if we postponed operations till the cool season, we must run the even greater risk of appearing to hesitate before a foe, and should give time for all the elements of discontent, first, to concentrate themselves at Mooltan and, then, to burst into a flame which might envelop the Punjab.

What were the circumstances which had placed us in this sad dilemma? Moolraj, the Dewan of Mooltan, was the son and successor of the famous Sawun Mull, to whom Runjeet Sing had committed the care of the redoubtable fortress which he had at last taken. The fortifications of Mooltan had been known to fame ever since the time of Alexander, and it was not likely that the chief who held it would long remain dependent on anyone else. Sawun Mull had been a good ruler, as Eastern rulers go, and after a reign of twenty years, in which he had amassed an enormous fortune, had died in 1844, leaving his son, Moolraj, the heir to his wealth and to his kingdom. The Sikhs, whatever their good qualities, are the moneymakers—the Jews or the Armenians—of the Indian peninsula; and Lal Sing, as the representative of the paramount power, demanded from Moolraj a nuzzur, or succession-duty, of a crore of rupees. It was a struggle for money rather than for power on the part of each, and Moolraj long managed to

fight off the evil day. But he was at last induced, under a safe-conduct from John Lawrence, to come to Lahore; and there, after tedious, but not unfriendly, negotiations, the payment of the succession-duty was arranged. But when Moolraj, in a moment of vexation, expressed a wish to resign his post, he was taken at his word. Another Sirdar was appointed in his place, and two English officers were told off to accompany him to Mooltan and act there as they were acting in other parts of the Punjab. Arthur Cocks, 'a fine, resolute, good-tempered fellow,' as John Lawrence calls him, who knew the Sikhs well, had been selected by both brothers for the ticklish business But an order from head-quarters to take no step in the matter till the new Resident should arrive, had caused another three months' delay, and had given the discontent at Mooltan time to come to a head. Currie, on his arrival, selected Vans Agnew, a civilian, and Lieutenant Anderson, brother-in-law to Outram, for the dangerous duty; and, supported by a mixed force of five hundred Sikhs and Ghoorkas, they had set out with the new Dewan, to take over the government from Moolraj. Unfortunately they did not go with their escort. They went by water, while the escort went by land, so that, by the end of the journey, they were hardly known to their natural protectors.

What followed is too well known, and has been described by too many pens, to call for a fresh description here. Vans Agnew and Anderson were treacherously struck down as they were riding through the gateway by the side of Moolraj, and, after they had been heroically defended, for some twelve hours, by that portion of their escort which remained faithful, were brutally murdered and their dead bodies were treated with every kind of indignity. The original attack, like the much more recent one on our embassy at Cabul, seems not to have been premeditated by those who struck the blow, still less to have been deliberately planned by the authorities. But in Asiatic cities, even more than in European, the sight of the means to do ill deeds often makes ill deeds done. The more resolute and reckless carry away by sheer force of will the half-hearted or well-disposed, and, thus, a whole city becomes involved in the guilt of a few. But in any case, Moolraj, unlike the late ill-fated ruler of Cabul, made the deed his own by adopting it after it was done, and called by proclamation on all the inhabitants of the Punjab—Sikh, Hindu, and Afghan—to rise against the hated foreigner.

Now then, if ever, was the time for prompt and energetic action. It was an occasion to put to the test the knowledge of the native

character and the fibre of each man who was in authority. What Lord Hardinge and Henry Lawrence would have done under such circumstances is clear enough from what they had so lately done in the case of Imamuddin in Kashmere. What Currie would have done, had he been left free to act, may be inferred from the steps he did, at once, take for a movement towards Mooltan, and from the advance which, later on, he carried out against the wishes, if not positive orders, of his superiors. How John Lawrence would have acted is put beyond the reach of doubt by the letters I have before me—letters written, not with that cheap wisdom which comes after the event and points out what the writer would have done when there was no longer any chance of his being able to do it, but sent off in hot haste, on the day on which he received the news, to Elliot the Secretary to Government, to Currie the Resident at Lahore, and to Wheeler the Brigadier-General commanding at Jullundur. This it is my business to bring out, rather than painfully to track the messages which passed and repassed between the Resident, the Governor-General, and the Commander-in-Chief, and which ended in their doing nothing at all.

How was this? The Commander-in-Chief was brave and generous as a lion, but he was always in extremes. When his blood was up, and he was within sound of a gun, there was nothing he would not do and dare. When he had cooled down, he showed an amount of caution which, in a less heroic nature, might have been put down to inertness or even timidity. The Governor-General was new to India. He was only thirty-six years of age, and, naturally enough, in this, the first burning question which had come before him, he was disposed to trust to the counsels of others rather than his own keen intelligence and masterful will. It was, perhaps, the only occasion in the whole of his Indian career on which he can be accused of having done so. The conclusion to which these two highest authorities came, was that it was too late to risk the safety of English troops in any active operations; in other words, as Henry Lawrence sarcastically put it, they came to a resolution 'to have a grand *shikar* (hunt) in the cold season, under the lead of the Governor-General.' Had the advice given by John Lawrence, and supported, to a great extent, by Currie, been followed to the end, it is not too much to say that the disturbance at Mooltan might—as we have almost invariably found in India under similar circumstances—very possibly, have ended where it began, and have proved a mere local outbreak.

The murder was commited on April 20. On the 30th, the news reached John in his remote hill station under the snowy peaks of the Himalayas; and, on that same day, he wrote two highly characteristic letters to Elliot and to Currie, extracts from which I proceed to give. We feel, as we read, how sound were the instincts and how keen the insight of the man who could divine, at a glance, the exact nature of the outbreak, and suggest the measures which would be most certain to suppress it. They are an anticipation of that far greater crisis which he would have to meet hereafter, when, cut off—perhaps happily cut off—from Governors-General and Commanders-in-Chief, it would be his to command rather than to suggest, to act rather than to think, and to break through all the restraints of etiquette and precedence in order that something of infinitely more value than etiquette and precedence might weather the storm.

My dear Elliot,—I have just heard from Currie, dated the 25th, of the melancholy affair at Mooltan, and the deaths of poor Agnew and Anderson. I have written to Currie offering to go over if my services can be of use. I do not want to thrust myself where I may not be wanted. But in such a crisis I think it right to volunteer. Currie seems inclined to leave it to the Durbar, and not to march troops on Mooltan. I send you a copy of my reply to him. The season, no doubt, is terribly bad for moving troops. But the alternative seems worse. The lives of none of our officers in Bunnoo, Peshawur, and Huzara will be safe, if speedy retribution does not fall on these scoundrels. It was touch and go in the Kashmere affair two years ago. It was then a question whether the Sheikh surrendered or the troops went over to him. If we do nothing, the whole of the disbanded soldiery of the Manjha will flock down and make common cause with the mutineers.

On the same day, he wrote to Currie: —

Bad as Moolraj's conduct may have been, I should doubt very much if he has had anything to do with the original outbreak. Depend on it he has been forced into it by circumstances. He was, notoriously, a timid man, and one of the chief points on which he originally so much insisted with me was, that he might be allowed to get away before it could be publicly known that he had given up the country. It has often happened that, in a row, the Sikhs will not fight against each other, and that the weaker party invariably joins the stronger. Still, it seems incredible that Khan Sing's force should have behaved as it has done. I much fear now that any troops of the Durbar's marching on Mooltan will do as Khan Sing's have done. Despite the heat and advanced season of the year, I would counsel action. Otherwise you will have *émeutes*, as

you fear, in Bunnoo, Huzara, and Peshawur. The officers, willing or not, must go with the soldiers to save their lives. Mooltan is a place of no strength. There is in your office a description of the fortifications, drawn up by poor Anderson. I would have over a brigade from Ferozepore and Jullundur, and march two European corps and six native ones on Mooltan. The place can't stand a siege. It can be shelled from a small height near it. I see great objection to this course. But I see greater ones in delay. The Durbar neither can do nor will do anything. I never saw them do anything. The initiative must, in all cases, come from us. Should you think that I can be of use in any way you have only to say so. I could leave Barnes in charge of my office and be over with you in five days from Kangra. I have no personal wish in the matter, but if I can be of use, it is my duty, in such a crisis, to help you. I would come by Denanuggur.

On the following day, he wrote again :—

My dear Currie,—I have been thinking over the Mooltan affair ever since I heard from you. I am still of opinion that our troops should go against the fort, not as supporters of the Sikh troops, but as principals. I would besiege the place, and if the garrison did not surrender at discretion I would storm it and teach them such a lesson as should astonish the Khalsa. If you don't act till the cold weather you will have the country, I fear, in a flame, and insurrections elsewhere. You will get no revenue out of either that country or the surrounding districts. In fact, it is impossible to say what will happen if you delay. In the event of your not sending our troops, it seems to me that it would be better not to send any Sikhs, for they will, assuredly, fraternise with the rebels. I cannot understand Moolraj's having hatched the plot. He had all to lose and nothing to gain. He might have remained at Mooltan had he chosen ; indeed, you showed him that you would rather he had remained. It may be that, not wishing to give up, and yet not willing to hold on on our terms of dependency, he allowed what he thought might be a petty *émeute* to be got up, in order to show us how troublesome it would be to manage the province. Be the cause what it may, I would not delay a day in making an example of the rascals. The day they hear the troops have left Lahore, they will lose half their strength. Delay will bring thousands to their standard.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN LAWRENCE.

P.S.—It is not to the Sikh Government that we should look to revenge the death of our officers.

It would have been difficult to give sounder advice than that which these letters, written off on the spur of the moment, contain,

But it was not acted on, or, if acted on at all, not till it was too late to be of avail. It is true that John Lawrence had been misinformed as to the strength of Mooltan, and, as he admitted a few days later, it would have been unwise to advance upon it without a siege train. But was there not a siege train waiting, all ready for action, at Ferozepore, which could be carried by water down the Sutlej to within forty miles of the fortress?—and was it not to guard against precisely such an insurrectionary movement as this that Lord Hardinge had left behind him three moveable brigades, ready to take the field at the shortest notice, at Ferozepore, at Jullundur, and at Lahore? At that time, no preparations had been made by Moolraj for a siege, and an immediate advance, combined with the news that the 'guns were following' apace, would, probably, have taken the heart out of such resistance as he was prepared to offer us. As regards the heat, if the English had been unequal to anything but fair-weather campaigns in India, they would never have conquered India at all. Seringapatam had been stormed on May 4—in the very height, that is, of the hot season; and, as John Lawrence thought of it, he must have recalled with a thrill of satisfaction that the storming party had been led by his gallant old father, who had been left lying for hours on the breach, in the fiery glare of the sun, and yet had weathered the storm. Alighur had been taken, and the battle of Assaye fought, in September, a more unhealthy season still; and John Lawrence himself recollected our troops marching up to Delhi from Shikawatti in June.

Happily, in another part of the Punjab, in the Derajat, there was a young lieutenant, then engaged in the Revenue Survey, who was in full sympathy not with the Governor-General or the Commander-in-Chief, but with the Commissioner of the Jullundur Doab, and who was in favour of immediate action. A few hasty lines from Agnew, addressed 'to General Van Cortlandt, in Bunnoo, or wherever else he may be,' had reached Herbert Edwardes in his tent at Dera Futteh Khan, on April 22, and had informed him of what had happened at Mooltan. Without waiting to refer the matter to any higher authorities, he, at once, determined to give all the aid he could. Accompanied only by the small force which formed the guard of a revenue officer in that turbulent district, and fully conscious that only a portion of it could be trusted, he collected boats, he crossed the Indus, he occupied Leia, the capital of Sing Saugar Doab, and there or thereabouts, to use his own words, 'like a terrier barking at a tiger,' he awaited the attack of Moolraj. Availing himself of the hostility which he knew to exist

between the different races in the Punjab, he enrolled 3,000 Pathans; thus following the reverse of the process which afterwards stood us in such good stead during the Mutiny. He armed the Mussulmans of the frontier against the Sikhs and Mussulmans of Mooltan, as we afterwards armed the Sikhs against the Mussulmans and Hindus of Delhi. Strengthened by these levies, by Van Cortlandt—an able officer who had been in the Sikh service—from Bunnoo, and by some troops from Bahawulpore, under Lake, he defeated Moolraj on June 18, the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo, in a pitched battle on the field of Kyneree, and drove him headlong back towards Mooltan. Following him up, he fought and won, a few days later, a second battle at Suddosain, and actually penned Moolraj and his forces within the walls of his famous fortress! 'Now is the time to strike,' he wrote to Currie; 'it is painful to see that I have got to the end of my tether.' 'A few heavy guns, a mortar battery, a few sappers and miners, and Major Napier to look after them'—this was all the assistance he had asked from the authorities before his advance. But it was not forthcoming. He could not 'go beyond his tether;' but the exploits which, as a young subaltern, he had already performed were worthy of the man who, a few years later, in still more dangerous times, was to hold so gallantly, against mutineers within and enemies without, the all-important frontier post of Peshawur.

Hearing of Edwardes' double victory, the Resident, who was still opposed, or only lukewarmly supported, by the supreme authorities, sent, on his own responsibility, a force from Lahore under General Whish to co-operate with that before Mooltan. But it was too late. It could not prevent a general rising. At best, it could only check its progress. And, worse still, the warning which John Lawrence had given against employing Sikh troops to coerce their own countrymen was neglected, and with the result which he had foreseen. Shere Sing, the Sikh commander, went over, at the critical moment, to the enemy. The siege of Mooltan, which had just been begun, was raised; and 'the drum of religion,' whose first rumblings had already been heard in Huzara and at Peshawur, on the north and west, now sounded loud and long at Mooltan, in the south, and summoned the Sikhs to rise everywhere, and strike for 'God and the Guru' against the foreigner. The disbanded veterans of Ferozeshuhr and Sobraon left, once more, the mattock and plough, and hurried to support the renascent Khalsa commonwealth. Nor were they to return to their homes again till the doubtfully contested field of Ferozeshuhr had

found its counterpart at Chillianwallah, and the crowning victory of the British at Sobraon had been thrown into the shade by their still more crowning victory at Gujerat.

The Mooltan outbreak, encouraged by our delays, had thus grown into a revolt of the Punjab, and the work of 1846 had to be begun over again. More than this, beyond the limits of the Punjab, Golab Sing, the monarch of our creation in Kashmere, was said to be only biding his time. And the much more formidable Dost Mohammed, hating, as well he might, those who had possessed the will to deprive him of his throne, and whose poverty alone had consented to restore it to him, entered into an alliance against us with the most inveterate enemies of his race and creed. It was a case of 'water with fire in ruin reconciled.' Sikh and Afghan, for the first time in their history, were to fight side by side; Peshawur, the most valuable acquisition of the Lion of the Punjab, was to revert to the Afghan; and 'the dream and the madness' of Dost Mohammed's life was to be fulfilled.

Roused by the extremity of the peril, the British lion began, at length, to bestir himself in earnest. Large reinforcements were called for from Bombay. Others came hurrying up from Bengal. Lord Dalhousie, shaking off his scruples and his advisers, set out, in October, from Calcutta, for the scene of active operations. 'Unwarned by precedent,' he said in public, at Barrackpore, just before he started, 'uninfluenced by example, the Sikh nation have called for war, and on my word, sirs, they shall have it with a vengeance.' And in October—exactly six months, that is, after the murder of Agnew and Anderson—the grand army which was to revenge it mustered at Ferozepore.

With the details of the war just begun, otherwise than as they affected John Lawrence, his province of the Jullundur Doab, his colleagues, and his future, this biography has little to do. A very rapid sketch must suffice.

It was not till November that Lord Gough took the command in person of the splendid army which had been collected. It was an army complete in all its branches, well supplied with cavalry, with draught animals, with ammunition, and with guns; an army which, looking at our long experience in India, people might have been excused for thinking would go anywhere and do anything. But the first action, fought on November 22, at Ramnuggur, on the Chenab, ended in a serious check, which, among other heavy losses, cost us the lives of Cureton and W. Havelock. The second action of Sadoolapore, on

December 3, though it was boldly claimed as a victory by the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, only induced the Sikhs to retire, at their own discretion and in good order, from the Chenab to the Jhelum—from a good position, that is, to a still better one in their rear. And now, for six weeks more, Lord Gough, on whom the Governor-General, knowing his character, had enjoined strict caution, forebore to advance. At last, on January 11, he moved forward, and at three in the afternoon of the 13th,—his combative instincts aroused by some half-spent cannon-balls which came lumbering in,—the fiery old general, in defiance of the warning given him by the battles of Moodki and Ferozeshuhr, gave the order to attack.

The battle of Chillianwallah was one of those chequered and desperate conflicts which, in spite of the gallantry displayed by a large portion of our troops, was almost more dangerous to us than an out-and-out defeat. The advance of a brigade of infantry at a speed which brought them exhausted and breathless among the enemy's guns, and after exposing them at the same time to the galling cross-fire of Sikh marksmen concealed in the jungle, ended in a hasty retreat and heavy loss; the advance of a brigade of cavalry without skirmishers in front, or supports to follow up behind, while our guns were so placed in their rear that not one of them could fire a shot in its support; the word of command heard or misheard, or possibly not heard at all, which suggested to ears that were too ready to hear it a welcome retreat; the retreat converted into a *sauve qui peut*, in which the 14th Dragoons remorselessly rode down our own guns and gunners and even those who were engaged in works of mercy behind them; the colours of three regiments and four guns taken by the enemy; the terrible total of 89 officers and 2,350 men killed or wounded—these are the chief incidents of the disastrous battle which in view, it is to be supposed, of the twelve guns which we had taken, the imagination of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief endeavoured to convert, in their public despatches, into another victory, but which the Governor-General, in a private letter which lies before me, characterises, together with its predecessors, as 'the lamentable succession of three unsatisfactory actions!' The facts were too strong for proclamations. The whole of India knew the truth, and those who can remember the mingled anxiety and indignation which the news of the 'victory of Chillianwallah' aroused in England, will remember also the sense of relief with which the

supersession of the brave old soldier, but the reckless general, the Marcellus of our Sikh wars, was received by the English public.

Hitherto, the conduct of the war by the supreme civil and military authorities had given little cause for satisfaction. But there was another set of men, the founders of the Punjab school, the statesmen-soldiers, or soldier-statesmen, who, under the humble name of 'Assistants to the Resident,' had been stationed in outlying parts of the Punjab, and who, throughout this gloomy period, had gone far to retrieve the shortcomings of their superiors. What Herbert Edwardes had done in his district, and beyond it, has already been described.

But George Lawrence at Peshawur, James Abbott in Huzara, Herbert at the fort of Attock, Reynell Taylor in the Derajat, and John Lawrence in the Jullundur Doab—cut off, as most of them were, from all communication with the outer world, or served by troops on whom little dependence could be placed, and, all of them, surrounded by a vast native population whom they had hardly yet found time to know—held on to their posts with heroic courage, hoping to suppress or to postpone the general rising till the supreme authorities could be induced to recognise accomplished facts and take the field. We turn with pleasure from the mingled vacillation and rashness, from the divided command, from the orders and counter-orders, from the undecided battles, and from the victories that were no victories, of the highest authorities, to the resolution, the fearlessness, the energy, the clearness of vision, which marked each and all of these servants of the East India Company. These were the men, some of them connected by family ties, and all of them by ties of friendship, of common service, and of sympathy with the subject of this biography, who helped to make Chillianwallah bearable, and Gujerat possible. What they did, side by side with John Lawrence, in the second Sikh war, seems like a preparation for what they or their successors were to do under him, nine years later, in the suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny. The one is a rehearsal for the other, as a brief narrative of what was done by the most conspicuous among them will show.

Take first the case of George Lawrence. He had been stationed at Peshawur, and though his troops had been plied with solicitations by their natural ruler, Chuttur Sing, to rise, he asserted and maintained the influence over the Sikhs which seemed to belong, as of right, to all the members of his family. He held on, with heroic bravery, to his post against Sikhs and Afghans alike, till, on his escape

at the last possible moment from the beleaguered Residency, he was betrayed into the enemy's hands by an Afghan whom Sir Henry Lawrence had laid under special obligations. The Sikhs, a far nobler race, to whom treachery and ingratitude are not naturally congenial, treated him as their honoured guest rather than as their prisoner; said they had received nothing but kindness from him and from his brothers; apologised for such appearance of restraint as they were obliged to put upon him, and allowed him, after an interval, to go on his parole to the British head-quarters.

Take the case of Lieutenant Herbert. He had been sent by George Lawrence, when an Afghan invasion seemed imminent, and when Chuttur Sing had already risen in Huzara, to occupy, in succession to Nicholson, the all-important post of Attock on the fords of the Indus. He held on to that dilapidated fort for seven weeks, with a small garrison of Pathans, who refused to desert him till Dost Mohammed himself should appear upon the scene; and when that happened, and they found that their wives and children were in the Ameer's power, they expressed their sorrow that they could do no more.

Take the still more striking case of James Abbott,—the one Englishman who, till very recent times, had set eyes on Khiva—a man often misunderstood or misliked by his superiors, but one of the most kindly and chivalrous of men, and, perhaps, of all his friends the one who has most appreciatively described the character of Henry Lawrence.[1] He had been stationed almost alone among the wild and untamed inhabitants of Huzara. Unsubdued by the cruelties and oppressions of the Sikhs, who used to keep ten regiments at a time in their country, they had yielded to his fatherly kindness, and, supported by them, he now held out for months, in the fort of Srikote against the large Sikh army under Chuttur Sing, and left it only at the end of the war. During his rule of five years which followed, he helped to turn the wildest and most desolate into one of the happiest and most peaceful districts of the Punjab. And if he received no external mark of honour from the Government he had served, he obtained, what he valued far more, the devoted attachment of his people. For many a year after his disappearance from among them, the natives loved to recall how he had fed their children with sweetmeats, which, when he went out, he carried with him for the purpose,

[1] See his 'Reminiscence' in the *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. pp. 146–154.

or to point with filial veneration to the stone on which he had rested for awhile, saying, 'It was on that stone that father Abbott sat.[1] A tribute this to the qualities of the man more grateful than the actual worship which, as I shall describe hereafter, was paid by the wild inhabitants of Bunnoo to the heroic Nicholson! So true is it, that the most lionlike courage is not inconsistent with the gentleness of a woman and the simplicity of a child; and so seldom is it that such qualities miss their true and appropriate reward.

Once more, take the case of Reynell Taylor. He had been left behind by Edwardes in the Derajat, when he marched for Mooltan, and he too proved equal to the emergency. Followed by a raw rabble of Pathan recruits, he cleared the frontier of Sikh soldiers, borrowed a honeycombed piece of ordnance from the Nawab of Tonk, and actually besieged the fort of Lukki, which was held by two regiments of Sikhs with ten guns. Firing round stones from the brook, in default of round shot, from his crazy bit of ordnance, without a single European soldier, with no hope of reinforcements, in the midst of a fanatical Mohammedan population and threatened by an army marching down the Kurrum valley from Cabul, he never thought of flinching, and, after a siege of a month, reduced the fort to submission, and secured to us for ever the possession of the Trans-Indus Provinces. The story of this heroic act is little known in England. It has not, so far as I am aware, ever been related in any English book, and, though it has been followed up by a series of exploits on the frontier not unworthy of it, yet a simple C.S.I. Reynell Taylor still remains. But it is not immaterial to this biography to record that on July 5, 1879, he received an honour which, 'dashed and flecked with sorrow' though it was, can hardly have been of less value in his eyes than the highest official recognition of his services. For, on that day, he was specially selected from amidst the vast throng of Indian heroes and statesmen who were following John Lawrence to his grave in Westminster Abbey, to bear the coronet which had been so well won and worn by his friend and chief.

Nicholson, Cocks, Lumsden, and Lake, it need hardly be said, had also done their duty right well wherever there was an opening, or wherever they could make one for themselves. But what of John Lawrence himself?

We last saw him pleading with almost passionate earnestness, after

[1] Raikes' *Revolt in North-West Provinces*, p. 26.

the outbreak at Mooltan, with the Governor-General, with the Brigadier at Jullundur, and with the Resident at Lahore, for immediate and strenuous action. His suggestions, from whatever causes, were not complied with, and with the results which he had foreseen. He had been anxious to go to Mooltan in person, but the rapid spread of the revolt made it look much more likely that Mooltan or its emissaries would come to him. He knew that a rising throughout the Punjab must be felt in his own Doab, and he made preparations accordingly. Let us briefly review his position.

The province had been annexed for little more than two years; a short interval this, in which to pacify a brave and energetic people who had been in arms against us; to sweep away the worst abuses of the old system, and to introduce the elements of a new one, 'of better manners, purer laws.' Yet this is what John Lawrence, in spite of his frequent absences at Lahore, had succeeded in doing. And he was now to reap the result. It is, of course, impossible that any system of government can be swept away and another be put in its place without inflicting a considerable amount of hardship. Hundreds of place-holders and of hangers-on to the skirts of Government necessarily lose their means of livelihood; hundreds of soldiers, finding that an era of peace and security has dawned, feel their *raison d'être* taken from them; scores of feudal chieftains chafe at the loss of their right to govern or misgovern; and John Lawrence, it should be added, was never the man to shrink from inflicting individual loss where he thought it to be just and necessary for the public good. The wonder is, under the circumstances, not that the discontent was so great, but that, thanks to the wisdom and moderation of the changes he made, it was so little; not that there were so many and such desperate risings against the yoke which, however light, must needs gall the necks of the wearers, but that they were so few, so ill-supported, and so easily suppressed.

The force in the Jullundur Doab was small enough for the work that might be expected of it. At Jullundur itself there were four native and one European regiment, some Irregular horse and a battery of artillery. Besides these, there were small detachments of native troops, which were posted at various points of vantage, such as Hoshiarpore and Kangra; and—more important than all for John Lawrence's purpose, as they were immediately subject to him—there were two local corps of military police, one composed of Sikhs, the other of Hill-Rajpoots. This was the whole of the force available

for the protection of the province ; and even of this, a large portion was to be drawn off, in the course of the war, for military operations in the Bari Doab.

The first symptom of the rising storm showed itself in May—within a week or two, that is, of Agnew's murder. It came from beyond the frontier. Emissaries from Mooltan traversed the hill districts, calling on the chiefs to rise, and promising them the restoration of all their rights and privileges. At the same time, Bhai Maharaja Sing, a Guru who had been outlawed for a plot formed under the very eyes of the Resident at Lahore, using the influence which his sacred character gave him, collected together several hundred followers to the north of the Beas. His object, as his movements showed, was the invasion of the British territory. But the fords of the river were too well watched by its natural guardians. He beat a retreat towards the Chenab ; he was there attacked by some Mussulmans, who had discovered that the British rule was preferable to the Sikh, was driven into the river, with hundreds of his followers, and was seen, so it was said, to disappear, with his famous black mare, beneath its waters. But a Guru was not fated to die like a dog ! He bore a charmed life, and reappeared now here, now there, till he was ultimately taken, as we shall see hereafter, at Jullundur, by Vansittart.

Towards the end of August, a second inroad took place. Ram Sing, son of the Vizier of Nurpore, one of the small hill states, put himself at the head of a band of marauders whom he had collected from the Jummoo Hills, crossed the Ravi, seized the fort of Shahpore, proclaimed, with tattoo of drums, that the English rule had ceased, and took up a commanding position at Nurpore. Charles Saunders, Deputy-Commissioner at Hoshiarpore—'a cool judicious officer,' says John Lawrence, 'one of the best I have got'—was the first, with Fisher's Irregular Corps, to arrive at the spot, and he was soon followed by Barnes, Deputy-Commissioner at Kangra, and John Lawrence, the Commissioner, in person. More troops came up, and, a few days later, the position was stormed (Sept. 18, 1848), considerable booty was taken, and Ram Sing escaped with difficulty to the Sikh army encamped at Russool.

Meanwhile, though, as I have shown, the rebellion had been spreading throughout the Punjab, it had been met by no corresponding effort on the part of the highest authorities. November the 1st had been fixed, six months beforehand, as the day on which our

campaign was to begin, and the rapid spread of the rebellion was no reason, in the opinion of the Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, for changing their plan! The revolt of Shere and Chuttur Sing at opposite ends of the province, the consequent raising of the siege of Mooltan, the unopposed march northward of Shere Sing, and the imminent danger of Lahore, which, had he known its weakness, he might have taken then and there, had produced their natural effect. All the Sirdars but two joined the insurgents, and the whole of the open country was in their hands.

A few extracts from a letter of John Lawrence to Brigadier Wheeler at Jullundur, dated September 25, will give some idea of the dangers against which, in view of this general rising, he had to guard, and of the scanty means at his disposal for doing so:—

I have just received your letter of the 19th. Whatever is finally determined on, you may depend on my working with you cordially and willingly, and, if I appear to be stepping beyond the immediate bounds of my own line in explaining my views, you must forgive me. Your objections to my proposition regarding Kangra and Nurpore are founded on the paucity of troops at your disposal. This may be an insurmountable obstacle to my wishes; but I will shortly state what arrangements might be made to admit of those I proposed, leaving you to determine what value is to be placed on my opinion. As regards Kangra, if but one wing of a corps can be spared, I would prefer it being placed in that fort, as it would thus give me the whole of the hill corps to knock about in the event of an *émeute*. The men are better suited to such work, and can be more easily moved than Regulars. As it is now, the utmost force I can detach are two companies—say one hundred and fifty men; the rest are in forts, the mass being required at Kangra. A small force, moved on the instant, confounds insurgents and disperses them, before they can gather strength. If not attacked at once, they daily increase in force, both from friends and enemies, for they plunder and destroy villages and force the people to follow them. Such was the case with Ram Sing. He murdered the headman of one village and seized those of others. Two days before we attacked him he was joined by one hundred and fifteen men of these places. I do not distrust the hill corps. I think they will be true to us, though people say otherwise at Lahore. But the fact of that corps being disposable to march on any point with their whole force, and the moral advantages alone of regular troops being at Kangra, may make the difference of a general disturbance in the hills or not. . . . These hills are full of disbanded soldiers, not inimical to us, but wanting service and bread; and more danger is to be apprehended here than in the plains of the Jullundur Doab. . . . In the Jullundur Doab there are

few disbanded soldiers, an open champaign country, and no forts. Two infantry corps, or a couple of irregular cavalry corps and a battery, would, I think, render all safe. In the hills, we have an area of three thousand square miles, full of soldiery, with but three companies at Nurpore, and the Sikh local corps locked up at Kangra. If it is thought necessary to put a corps in Govindgurh, surely it is incumbent to take care of Kangra; and this I can't do if I detach any large body of men from it. Only consider the moral effects of any general disturbance in the hills; the roads rendered unsafe, the towns plundered, and the revenues unpaid!

Whether the request of John Lawrence for reinforcements, thus made, was ultimately successful or not I have failed to discover. But, in any case, he acted as if it were, for during the next two or three months he was here, there, and everywhere, with his flying hill-corps, putting down insurrection wherever it showed its head, and as soon as it had shown it, and at the expense of very little blood or money. It was also with his full approval and advice that Wheeler, who was reluctant to spare any of his troops from Jullundur for the hill country, crossed with a portion of them out of his own district into the Bari Doab, to put down disaffection and seize some forts there.

In November, news came that the frontier fort of Pathancote, which was garrisoned by only fifty Sikhs from Kangra and a few police, was being besieged by a thousand insurgents, who had been collected in the Bari Doab and Kashmere. The danger was urgent, for the fort was large and the garrison small. It had ammunition and supplies for five days only, and the garrison, composed as it was of Sikhs, might be disposed to hand over the fort at once to the enemy. By a night march, Barnes relieved the garrison and made the besiegers withdraw to Denanuggur, on the Sikh frontier; and by another night march, John Lawrence,—like Joshua, when summoned by the Gibeonites, under circumstances of similar urgency,—marching 'all night,' crossed the Beas into the Punjab and attempted to surprise the rebels while they were still asleep. He arrived an hour too late, but followed them up with vigour and dispersed them. 'The Sikh troops,' he says in his report, 'though they knew that they were going against Sikhs, evinced the greatest spirit and alacrity.'

It will be remembered that, unlike the inhabitants of the plains, who had not only acquiesced in but welcomed our rule, the hill chiefs were naturally more or less discontented with the loss of their ancient privileges; and the flame which had been smouldering, now burst

out simultaneously in different directions. At the other extremity of the hill country, the Kutoch chief raised the standard of revolt, seized his ancestral palace at Teera and some adjoining forts, and fired a royal salute announcing the disappearance of the British Raj. At the same time the Raja of Jeswun, lower down in the hills, and the Raja of Duttarpore, and the Bedi of Oonah, from the plain country, rose up against us. Dividing his force into two parts, Lawrence sent Barnes, at the head of one of them, against the Kutoch chieftain, while he himself, with five hundred of the Sikh corps and four guns, moved down the Jeswun valley against the other insurgents. The success of both expeditions was complete. Barnes captured his opponent and the forts belonging to him. Lawrence did the same. Subdividing again the small force into two columns, with one of them, he captured a hill above Umb, held by the enemy; with the other, he destroyed the fort. Both Rajas fell into his hands.

The Bedi of Oonah might have proved a much more troublesome foe. He held large possessions both in the plains and in the hills, and was a man of considerable ambition and arrogance. He was, moreover, as I have shown, the high-priest of the Sikhs, being descended from Nanuk, the great Guru. This position he had won from his brother, whom he had slain in battle. Such a man could not fail to be hostile to us, and his opposition was intensified by the fact that we had set our faces against the practice, so dear to the Bedi, of female infanticide. Many of his people, however, refused to fight for him, and, on the advance of John Lawrence with a body of Sikhs who seemed as ready to go against him as against the Rajas of the hills, he abandoned his stronghold and took refuge in the camp of Shere Sing. I may add that he shared in the privations and disasters of the subsequent campaign, surrendered to us at its close, and spent the rest of his life as a British pensioner at Umritsur.

The retreat of the Bedi into Sikh territory ended John Lawrence's campaign—a campaign of thirteen days only, but as complete, on a small scale, as any which was ever fought. A bloodless campaign is apt to escape the notice of an historian, for the very reasons which—if prevention is better than cure, and if to save life and money is better than to throw them away—ought to attract particular attention to it. From this time forward, not a gun was fired in the Jullundur Doab, not even when the echoes of the disastrous battle of Chillianwallah might well have roused it to one more effort; and that this was so, was due chiefly to the skill, the energy, the intrepidity, the

presence of mind of the Commissioner. With a mere handful of troops at his disposal, upon whose fidelity, till he had tested it in actual warfare, he could not safely count, he had taken measures to quell risings in the most opposite parts of his province, had organised his own commissariat, had kept the military authorities up to the mark, had carried on the civil government of the country, had led Sikhs against Sikhs, religious enthusiasts against their own high-priest! In November of that memorable year, the scales seemed evenly balanced in the Punjab, or even to incline, as the result of the first three general engagements, in favour of the Sikhs. How much more desperate would the struggle have been, had the Jullundur Doab burst into a flame and threatened the flank and rear of our hard-pressed army! Golab Sing, left to himself, and surrounded by the rebels, would, assuredly, have joined them, and, probably, at least one more Chillianwallah would have preceded Gujerat.

Such brilliant services could not fail to be noticed by the remarkable and masterful spirit who had succeeded Lord Hardinge as Governor-General, who was just throwing off the slight symptoms of hesitation which, on first landing, had made him defer to the judgment of others, and who was, henceforth, bent on showing everybody, perhaps only too bluntly, that he could afford to stand alone. 'It was,' writes Lord Dalhousie to Henry Lawrence from Ferozepore, 'in order that no proclamation should be issued without being previously sanctioned by me, and in order to ensure unity of action by the Government and its officers, and to avoid differences of opinion, that I advanced to the verge of the frontier; and it is for this that I remain here now.'

The bunglings, the delays, and the disasters which had marked the opening of the campaign had not, it will readily be believed, taken place without causing many high words and much mutual recrimination between the fine old Commander-in-Chief and the young and self-reliant Governor-General. And a few extracts from the confidential letters of Lord Dalhousie to Henry Lawrence, which have been kindly entrusted to me by Henry Lawrence's surviving son, will help to fill a large gap which I find in Lord Lawrence's letters from October 1848 to September 1849, and will also serve to bring vividly before us one side (and I think the least lovable side) of the man who was henceforward to exercise so powerful an influence over the destinies of the Lawrence brothers. They will help to explain so much that is pleasant and so much that is painful in their subsequent

relations to him that I have no scruple in inserting them here. A special interest, it will be remembered, attaches to the correspondence of Lord Dalhousie, from the fact that the bulk of it—all, that is, over which his executors have an exclusive control—is sealed up for fifty years after his death. Conscious of the integrity of his motives, he has thus appealed from the hasty praise or condemnation of contemporaries, to the deliberate judgment of posterity; and any conclusions, therefore, which we may draw from a portion of his correspondence, even though it be so extensive and so important a correspondence as that with the brothers Lawrence, must be held with some reserve.

Henry Lawrence had gone, as I have related, to England on a year's leave, which was to be extended, if necessary for his health, to two. But the news of the outbreak at Mooltan determined him to return as soon as possible to his post. He left England in November, reached Bombay in December, hurried up to Mooltan, took part in the operations of the final siege, left it on January 9, brought the first news of the capture of the town—though not of the fort—to Lord Dalhousie, went on to the camp of the Commander-in-Chief, and was present, on the 13th, at the battle of Chillianwallah. His beneficent influence had made itself felt even before he arrived. The Sikhs had not been slow to remark that the outbreak had followed so soon after his departure, and they hoped that his return might be the signal for a pacification. This general belief in the *Ikbal* (prestige) of Henry Lawrence was, in itself, enough to arouse the spirit of Lord Dalhousie, to make him put his foot down, and show his subordinate that, *Ikbal* or no *Ikbal*, it was Lord Dalhousie, and not Henry Lawrence, who would have the last word on each question as it came up. Nor can it be said that he was wrong in this. There had been rumours afloat that Moolraj intended to surrender to Sir Henry Lawrence as soon as he arrived, in the hope of getting more favourable terms from him than could be got from any one else. But a letter written on December 12 from Sirhind, by the Governor-General, and intended to meet Sir Henry Lawrence on his arrival, was calculated to remove all misconception on this point :—

I have to inform you that I will grant no terms whatever to Moolraj, nor listen to any proposal but unconditional surrender. If he is captured he shall have what he does not deserve—a fair trial; and if, on that trial, he shall prove the traitor he is, for months in arms against the British Government, or accessory to the murder of British officers, then, as sure

as I live, he shall die. But you have one answer alone to give him now —unconditional surrender. I have told you what will follow it.

An earlier letter, written on November 13 from Allahabad, before the campaign had well begun, shows that Lord Dalhousie had, even then, made up his mind as to the necessity of annexation; and there will be few who have followed the history thus far who will not agree with him on this point rather than with Henry Lawrence.

Our ulterior policy (he says) need not be promulgated till Mooltan has been taken and the Sikh rising has been met and crushed; but I confess I see no halting-place midway any longer. There was no more sincere friend of Lord Hardinge's policy, to establish a strong Hindu government between the Sutlej and the Khyber, than I. I have done all that man could do to support such a government, and to sustain that policy. I no longer believe it feasible to do so, and I must act according to the best of my judgment in what is before us.

On January 18, five days after Chillianwallah, Henry Lawrence looked in upon his old quarters at Lahore, of which he was again to take charge as Resident on the 1st of the following month, and there, as the result of the 'victory' of Chillianwallah, he found the Brigadier in command talking of building up the gates and breaking down the bridges, to delay the onward march of the 'conquered' Sikhs!

You say you are grieved (says Lord Dalhousie to him) at all you saw and heard at Lahore; so am I—so I have long been; but I don't know whether our griefs are on the same tack.

In other letters from Ferozepore he writes:—

Never mind what other people say about your having authority over the Sutlej Provinces, or whether they like it or not. I think it expedient you should have it for the public good, and that's enough for anybody. Rub Colonel ——'s nose in the dirt if it's necessary. General —— is beyond all human patience and endurance. Pray coax or frighten Brigadier —— away.

The letter in which Lord Dalhousie, who had so lately arrived in India and had never even seen the Punjab, severely reprimanded Henry Lawrence—not for a proclamation which he had issued on his own authority, but for the draft of one which he, with the full consent of the Governor-General, had prepared and then humbly submitted again to him for his approval, simply because he had inserted in it some slight expression of his personal feelings for a brave foe—has already been published, in great part, by Herman Merivale,

in his life of Sir Henry Lawrence.[1] It need not, therefore, be quoted again here. The reception of such a letter would have been gall and wormwood to a man of a far less sensitive and generous nature than Henry Lawrence, and it is painful to those who know what he had done and what he was, to read it even now.

Such is the lot, the unenviable, but, perhaps, inevitable, lot of some of the best of our Indian public servants. And it is a drawback to their condition which the changing circumstances of the Government of India, the rapidity of communication between it and England, the increasing connection of European with Indian politics, and the party spirit thus imported into regions which should be looked upon as beyond its reach, seems likely, in the future, to increase rather than to diminish. A new Viceroy comes out, bent, wisely or unwisely, on reversing the policy of his predecessor, or, it may be, of all the wisest of his predecessors. In order to do so, he has to manipulate or get rid of the subordinate agents of that policy, and it will depend to a great extent upon his tact, his sympathy, and his large-heartedness, whether he eases their fall, or intensifies its bitterness. It will sometimes happen that the more an agent has been trusted by one Governor-General, the less he will be trusted by his successor; the more he knows of the merits of a particular question, the less will his opinion be asked upon it. It is, perhaps, only human nature that it should be so. The Athenian rustic was not the only person in the world who would have been glad to banish Aristides, because he was tired of hearing him called the Just. The consideration, therefore, with which an Indian officer is treated by a new Governor-General is, sometimes, likely to be in inverse proportion to his merits. But Lord Dalhousie, whatever his faults, had a single eye to the public good, and a determination to learn all that was to be said upon a subject before he made up his mind upon it. He gave his confidence freely to any subordinate whom he recognised as worth it, provided only that that subordinate, after he had delivered his protest, would loyally do his bidding; and when a man was a good man, Lord Dalhousie's worst enemies will admit that he never failed to recognise him as such. 'You give,' he says to Henry Lawrence on February 13, 'and will, I hope, continue to give, me your views frankly. If we differ, I shall say so; but my saying so' —and here he undoubtedly hits a blemish in Henry's mental con-

[1] Vol. ii. p. 123.

stitution—'ought not to be interpreted to mean want of confidence. And, even earlier, on February 3, 'I assured you lately,' he says, 'with entire sincerity, that I have full confidence in your ability, your vigour, and your experience. My confidence in your possession of these qualities will always ensure that any view you submit shall receive from me the most respectful and mature consideration.'

With this explanation of what I believe to have been the attitude of Lord Dalhousie towards his subordinates, I may proceed to give a few of the more striking passages from his letters, illustrating his force of expression, his self-reliance, his determination to have his own way, and his indignation—possibly, sometimes, the shortsighted indignation of a civilian who could not see all the difficulties which were visible to the military eye—at the blunders and shortcomings of the military authorities, especially of the brave old Commander-in-Chief.

One question which had already called down the Olympian thunders on the devoted head of Henry Lawrence was the question which was looming in the distance, of the treatment of the conquered—if, indeed, they ever should be conquered—Sirdars. Henry Lawrence, who knew them and was known by them so well, was, with his usual generosity, in favour of giving them the easiest terms compatible with safety. But Lord Dalhousie would hear of nothing of the kind. 'Their lives and their subsistence' was all that he would promise to these proud and powerful nobles, even if they submitted at once. And when, at last, they fell into his hands he was as good as his word. The more formidable of their number he proposed to banish. 'Chuttur Sing and Shere Sing cannot be allowed to live at home and weave treachery at leisure.' Their chivalrous treatment of the captive George Lawrence and of the English ladies, about whose release Lord Dalhousie, throughout his correspondence, shows the tenderest interest, seemed to him to be no reason at all for dealing chivalrously with them. 'As for promising easier terms because they have treated the prisoners well, I hold a different view. I hold that Chuttur Sing and his sons, in seizing their best friends and making them prisoners, have shown themselves unmitigated ruffians; and that they have not ill-treated them into the bargain, rescues them from irrecoverable infamy and nothing more.' In vain, did Henry Lawrence plead, day after day, with touching earnestness for the less guilty Sirdars.

Nothing (replied Lord Dalhousie) is granted to them but maintenance. The amount of that is open to discussion, but their property of every kind will be confiscated to the State. . . . In the interim, let them be placed somewhere under surveillance; but attach their property till their destination is decided. If they run away, our contract is void. If they are caught, I will imprison them. And if they raise tumult again, I will hang them, as sure as they now live, and I live then.

Everything in camp (he says on February 11), as far as the Commander-in-Chief is concerned, grows worse and worse. . . . I expected no good tidings, and the best news which I now hope for is, that his Excellency has not had his 'blood put up,' but has waited the few days which will give him reinforcements, that will enable him to make sure work of the next action. I have written to him to-day on his future proceedings in terms which I am aware will be very distasteful to him, but which it is both necessary that I should employ as a caution to him, and prudent that I should address to him in relief of my own responsibility.

On the following day, referring to a request of Henry Lawrence that he might go to the camp and throw his influence into the scale on the side of vigour as well as prudence, he writes thus :—

It is already too notorious that neither you nor anybody else can exercise any wholesome influence on the mind of the Commander-in-Chief; if you could have done so, the action of Chillianwallah would never have been fought as it was fought. . . . All that we can do will hardly restore the prestige of our power in India, and of our military superiority, partly from the evidence of facts, and partly from the unwise and unpatriotic and contemptible croaking in public of the European community itself all over India, high and low. . . . Moreover, I have my orders. I am ordered, in the first instance, to conquer the country. Please God, I will obey.

Lord Gough, it should be remarked here, had been waiting by Lord Dalhousie's own directions, for the reinforcements with which General Whish was, at that moment, hurrying up from Mooltan, before he should risk another battle. And it was during this inaction that news arrived that the enemy, who had so long been encamped opposite us at Russool, had suddenly left their encampment and had gone off, Heaven knew where; for some of our informants said they were marching eastward for Jhelum, others westward for Gujerat!

Well may you say (writes Lord Dalhousie to Henry Lawrence on February 15) that it is wonderful that the Sikhs are allowed so to play around us. Other and stronger epithets would not be less applicable. I have a letter to-day from the Commander-in-Chief. He is utterly mystified.

The mystery was soon cleared up, and it was found that Shere Sing had turned Lord Gough's right, had got into his rear, had established his head-quarters at Gujerat, and was thus threatening, or appearing to threaten, an advance on the ill-protected city of Lahore.

Lord Gough, meanwhile, who had been complaining, for a month past, of the encumbrance of his heavy baggage, but had declined to move it from his camp, found it impossible to follow up the enemy closely, or even to detach a brigade to guard the crossing of the river.

It is sad work (says Lord Dalhousie) to be thus out-generalled day after day. . . . I wait, as patiently as I may, the announcement of where the enemy are, or what we are doing. At present I have only the intelligence of the Commander-in-Chief, which might be stereotyped, that 'the order is countermanded *till to-morrow*.'

A letter written by Lord Dalhousie to Henry Lawrence, on February 20, is so intensely characteristic of the man, shows so vividly his strength of mind, his strength of will, his strength of expression, and at the same time proves so clearly that the submission which he required from his subordinates he equally expected them, in their turn, to require from theirs, that I make no apology for quoting it almost in full:—

The tidings you send, on the whole, are satisfactory, and I pray God we may, for the sake of all, and for the peace of this country, have achieved a 'crowning' victory before long. I observe what you say regarding General Campbell (Sir Colin) having told you that there was 'no thought of crossing the Jhelum this season.' Your brother will have ere this reassured you on that point, which he incidentally mentioned to me. What 'thought' the camp of the Commander-in-Chief has signifies very little. The camp's business is to find fighting; I find thought; and such thought as the camp has hitherto found is of such d—d bad quality, that it does not induce me to forego the exercise of my proper functions. It is too late to enter to-night into the details of your letter. I will only say now generally, that the camp *will* cross the Jhelum this season, and, please God, the Indus also; that the Commander-in-Chief and General Thackwell, or the Departments, will not cross it; that General Gilbert will command, and I hope the job will be well done. All this I communicated to the Commander-in-Chief some time ago, authorising him, and requiring him, in the event of the opportunity presenting itself, to make the arrangements himself, and expedite matters as much as possible.

I am greatly surprised with what you write to me about Major Edwardes, or rather, I should say I am greatly vexed, but not surprised

at all. [Edwardes, it should be explained here, had disbanded a Pathan regiment, whose fidelity he had suspected, without any authorisation from Sir Henry Lawrence.] From the tone of your letter, I perceive it is not necessary to say that you should pull up Major Edwardes for this at once. But I further wish to repeat what I said before, that there are more than Major Edwardes in the Residency who appear to consider themselves, nowadays, as Governor-General at least. The sooner you set about disenchanting their minds of this illusion the better for your comfort and their own. I don't doubt you will find bit and martingale for them speedily. For my part, I will not stand it in quieter times for half-an-hour, and will come down unmistakably upon any one of them who may 'try it on,' from Major Edwardes, C.B., down to the latest enlisted general-ensign-plenipotentiary on the establishment. To-morrow I will write again.

Believe me,
Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

The admirers of Lord Dalhousie—and it must be admitted that these letters, incisive and racy, and often opportune, as they are, are not calculated to make anyone love him—and the admirers of Lord Gough, who, in spite of his blunders and vacillation, was, in virtue of his gallantry and martial bearing, beloved by his army, will, alike, reflect with pleasure that the Commander-in-Chief, while he was the object of such unsparing sarcasm and animadversion, was preparing the way, by a careful exploration of the ground, and by a series of masterly movements, for as crowning a victory as ever smiled upon our arms in India. The battle of Gujerat was fought on February 21. With 20,000 men and a hundred guns, Lord Gough attacked the Sikhs, who were in a position chosen and fortified by themselves and numbered 50,000 men armed with sixty guns. Taught by bitter experience, or influenced, it may be, by the strong letters of Lord Dalhousie, which I have before me, he changed his tactics and, with the help of the skilled advice of Sir John Cheape of the Engineers and Sir Patrick Grant, his son-in-law, kept himself and his men in check till the artillery, in which our real strength lay, had done its proper work. The Sikhs, even after their guns were silenced, fought like heroes, but they were utterly routed ; and Gilbert, 'the best rider in India,' in a ride of many days, followed up the wreck of their army, till, at length, it surrendered with its guns, its ammunition, and—more important than all in Lord Dalhousie's eyes—its English prisoners.

Few more striking scenes have ever been witnessed in India than

this final submission of the Sikh army, the last remnant of the great Khalsa commonwealth. 'With noble self-restraint'—to use the words of Edwin Arnold—'thirty-five chiefs laid down their swords at Gilbert's feet, while the Sikh soldiers, advancing, one by one, to the file of the English drawn across the road, flung down tulwar, matchlock, and shield upon the growing heap of arms, salaamed to them as to the "spirit of the steel," and passed through the open line, no longer soldiers.' But it must have been a more touching sight still, when —as it has been described to me by eye-witnesses—each horseman among them had to part, for the last time, from the animal which he regarded as part of himself—from the gallant charger which had borne him in safety in many an irresistible charge over many a battle-field. This was too much even for Sikh endurance. He caressed and patted his faithful companion on every part of his body, and then turned resolutely away. But his resolution failed him. He turned back, again and again, to give one caress more, and then, as he tore himself away for the very last time, brushed a teardrop from his eye, and exclaimed, in words which give the key to so much of the history of the relations of the Sikhs to us, their manly resistance, and their not less manly submission to the inevitable, 'Runjeet Sing is dead to-day!'

But Gilbert's task was not yet done. Pursuing his headlong career further still, he drove the Afghan contingent over the Indus, through Peshawur, and right up to the portals, the happily forbidding portals, of the Khyber. The battle of Gujerat thus brought to a close, not the campaign only but the war. All previous shortcomings were forgotten in the enthusiasm of victory, and the victor of Gujerat was able, with a good grace, to hand over the command to Sir Charles Napier, who had been sent out, in hot haste, to supersede him, and arrived from England early in May.

The whole of the Punjab, together with Peshawur and the Trans-Indus provinces, now lay at Lord Dalhousie's feet as the prize of victory; and he was not the man to shrink, either on general or on special grounds, from appropriating the prize. 'I take this opportunity,' he says in one of his State papers written a year or two later, 'of recording my strong and deliberate opinion, that, in the exercise of a sound and wise policy, the British Government is bound not to put aside or neglect such rightful opportunities of acquiring territory or revenue as may from time to time present themselves'—a sentence of death, just or unjust, necessary or unnecessary, expedient or in-

expedient, upon how many native states! But, in the case of the Punjab, there could be no question about the justice, and little about the expediency or necessity, of applying the general rule. Twice the Sikhs had attacked us unprovoked, and, the second time, under circumstances which laid them open to the charge of treachery and ingratitude, as well as deadly hostility. The experiment of sustaining the Khalsa against its own internal weakness had been tried honestly, and under the most favourable circumstances, by Lord Dalhousie as well as by Lord Hardinge, by John as well as by Henry Lawrence, and it had failed. We had remained in the country, to begin with, against our own wishes, and only at the unanimous and urgent request of the Sirdars; and no sooner had we acceded to their importunity than they treacherously rose against us in arms, and, once again, by their enthusiasm, their discipline, and their valour, imperilled the safety of our Indian Empire.

Lord Dalhousie had made up his mind at an early point in the struggle as to what must be its ultimate result, and even so chivalrous a supporter of native states and rights as Henry Lawrence had always been, had not done more than meet his views with a half-hearted opposition. If he was disposed to deny the expediency, he was forced to admit the justice of annexation. John, with clearer views of what the safety of India required, thought it to be expedient as well as just. The two brothers, as I gather from the few papers relating to this time which I have before me, had been living together at Lahore since January. And when an interview between the Governor-General and the Resident was deemed necessary to arrange for the impending annexation, we can hardly wonder if the Resident, instead of going himself, preferred to send his brother John on an errand which must have been so distasteful to him. The momentous interview took place at Ferozepore on March 12; and on the following day, after 'two long conversations,' John returned to Lahore, 'charged to convey to his brother the substance' of what they had been discussing, both as to Lord Dalhousie's intentions and as to the mode of carrying them into execution. It was, I believe, the first time that Lord Dalhousie had set eyes upon the man who was so soon to become the most famous of all his lieutenants. But, drawing his conclusions from the vigour he had shown as Magistrate of Delhi during the first Sikh war, from the manner in which he had governed the Jullundur Doab in peace and in war, and from his correspondence with the Secretary to Government which he had seen and studied, he

had already taken the measure of the man, and had begun to rate him at his proper value. 'What is to be done?' asked Lord Dalhousie, self-reliant and self-sufficing as he was, of the subordinate, whose advice he was hereafter so often to ask, and, even when the answer given did not harmonise with his previous views, he was not seldom to take—'what is to be done with the Punjab now?' and John Lawrence, who knew well that his questioner had made up his mind, at all hazards, ultimately to annex the conquered province, answered with characteristic brevity, 'Annex it now.' Difficulty after difficulty was started by the Governor-General, but as Demosthenes, when asked what was the first, the second, and the third requisite of an orator, replied in one word, 'Action; action; action,' so John Lawrence met each difficulty as it was started with what he considered to be the best and the only sufficient method of meeting it—'Annex it now; annex it now; annex it now.' Immediate annexation would be easy while the people were still crushed by their defeat; it would anticipate the difficulties and dangers of the hot weather, which the last year had brought into such fatal prominence; finally, it would at once anticipate and clinch the determination of the Directors at home.

On March 29, Lord Dalhousie sent his Secretary, Sir Henry Elliot, to Lahore, charged to declare publicly his determination respecting the Punjab; and, on the following day, in presence of Sir Henry Lawrence, the Resident, and his brother John; in presence of the faithful remnant of the Sikh Durbar; in presence also of the young Maharaja, who took his seat, for the last time, on the throne of Runjeet Sing, Elliot read aloud the fateful proclamation. The dynasty of Runjeet Sing was to be deposed; the young Maharaja was to receive 50,000*l.* a year, and to have the right of residing wherever he liked, outside the limits of the Punjab; and the whole of the territories of the five rivers, together with the Crown property and jewels, above all, the peerless Koh-i-noor, were to belong to the British. The proclamation was received by those present with silence and almost with indifference. It was a step fraught indeed with tremendous possibilities for good and evil. It overthrew the fondest hopes and the most generous aspirations of Henry Lawrence's life, but it was justified by what had gone before it, and the most resolute opponent of unnecessary annexations will admit that it has been more than justified by its results.

CHAPTER XI.

THE WORK OF THE PUNJAB BOARD. 1849–1852.

THE Punjab had been annexed, but how was it to be governed? It might be placed under a purely military government, like that of Scinde—a system dear to the heart of the conqueror of Scinde, the self-willed and brilliant Sir Charles Napier, who was now on the point of landing in India as Commander-in-Chief, who despised all civilians as such, but reserved a special portion of his hatred, as well as scorn, for those 'soldier politicals' who, by doffing the red coat and donning the black, had shown that they deliberately chose the darkness rather than the light, and yet who—as even he could not deny—had gone far to make India what it was. Or, again, the precedent afforded by most of our earlier and more settled provinces might be followed; the Punjab might have a purely civil government, under the control of a trained civilian, whose primary object it would be, not to make it a stepping-stone to further conquests beyond, but to prove to the East India Company that it could be well governed, and yet turn out to be a financial, as well as a military and political acquisition. This was the system which it might have been expected would have been preferred by a Governor-General who had never heard a shot fired till he reached the Sikh frontier, and who, it was then believed, cherished almost as great a dislike for military as did Sir Charles Napier for civil rule.

Was, then, Sir Charles Napier or Lord Dalhousie to have his way? Neither, and yet both. Both, that is, in part. The scheme upon which Lord Dalhousie hit, as the result of his personal knowledge of the men who had the best claim to administer the annexed province, was as novel in the history of our Indian Empire as it was, at first sight, unpromising. The Punjab was to be governed, not by any one man, however eminent he might be, either as a soldier, or as a statesman, or as a mixture of both, but by a Board, the members of which were to be drawn from both branches of the service, and were

to work under a system of 'divided labour, but of common responsibility.'

'A Board,' remarks Sir Charles Napier, when criticising the new arrangement, 'rarely has any talent.' And other and less unfriendly observers, knowing the antagonistic and self-contradictory elements which this particular Board contained, remarked that it was self-condemned from its birth; that it contained within itself the seeds of its own dissolution. There was truth in these sayings. But it was only a small portion of the truth. A Board is in itself a compromise, and, therefore, cannot possibly have the unity, the rapidity, the concentration, the individuality, which a single mind—especially if that single mind has within it a spark of the sacred fire of genius—can bring to bear on those whom it governs. Again, it was inevitable that the seething elements implied by the presence of such diverse and yet such masterful spirits as Henry and John Lawrence would one day become explosive. A volcano may be quiescent for many a year, but it is a volcano still.

It does not follow, however, because the Board was, at no distant day, doomed to die, that therefore it was stillborn. It did precisely the work which it was expected and meant to do, and which, certainly, no one of itst hree members would have done so well by himself. In the three years of its existence, it accomplished, at whatever cost to the peace of mind of its constituent parts, a task, of which no one of them need have been ashamed, even if it had been the result of a lifetime. If the Board succeeded in reducing the most warlike and turbulent people who had ever crossed our path in India to submision, and made them not only submissive but contented; if it, literally as well as figuratively, beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks; if, in dealing with the widely different races and classes which the Punjab contained, it abolished an old system and introduced a new, with, on the whole, the minimum of inconvenience or injury to the few and the maximum of benefit to the many—and that it did all this, and a good deal more than this, I hope now to show—then it did a noble work; it was its own best justification, and abundantly answered alike the expectations of its founder and the highest hopes of the distinguished men of whom it was composed.

The Board was to consist of three members. At the head of it, as of prescriptive right, came the man who had filled the highest post in the country before its annexation, first as Resident, and then, as he

might almost be called, Regent—the chivalrous and high-spirited, the eager and indefatigable, Henry Lawrence. That he was appointed to the first place in the administration of the new province is almost as creditable to a man of the autocratic tendencies of Lord Dalhousie as to Henry Lawrence himself. The friend and mentor of Lord Hardinge had already had many a sharp brush with Lord Hardinge's successor, and there was an antagonism of nature between the two men which each must have felt that no amount of mutual forbearance could bridge over. But Lord Dalhousie, as I have shown, was able to respect and to trust those from whom he differed, if he knew that they had the root of the matter in them. And he was certainly not the man to pass over, on the score of mere incapability of temperament, the pre-eminent claims which Henry Lawrence's previous services, his knowledge of the Sikhs, and his influence over them gave him. Had Lord Dalhousie been anxious to clear him out of his path and to put somebody else in his place who would be more congenial to himself, who would prove a mere tool in his hands, and would be content to register and carry out his orders, it would have been easy for him to do so without incurring any obloquy in the process. For Henry Lawrence, finding that his scruples against annexation had been finally overruled, voluntarily placed his resignation in Lord Dalhousie's hands, and would, certainly, have carried his purpose out had not Lord Dalhousie urged him to reconsider it, on the unanswerable plea that the objects dearest to his heart could not be thwarted and might be furthered by his remaining at Lahore. The argument was as honourable to Lord Dalhousie, who, knowing the differences between himself and his subordinate, could go out of his way to employ it, as to Henry Lawrence, who, even in the bitterness of his soul, could recognise its binding force.

Next to Henry Lawrence on the Board, in point of influence, if not of seniority, and marked out for it by his family name, and by his services in the Delhi district, in the Jullundur Doab, and at Lahore itself, came Henry Lawrence's brother, John. His knowledge of the Sikh races was only less than that of his brother; while, in mastery of details, in financial skill, in power of continuous work, and in civil training generally, he was far superior to him. A man who had ruled the Jullundur Doab during the last two years in the way in which John Lawrence had ruled it, and with the results which the prolonged and doubtful struggle of the second Sikh war had brought into full relief, was clearly the man to have a potential voice

in the rule of the four other Doabs which the fortune of war had now thrown into our hands.

But a Board must consist of more than two members, and Charles Greville Mansel, the third member invited to serve upon it, was a man of more equable and philosophic temperament than either of the Lawrences. Like John, he was a civilian who had served his apprenticeship in the best school then known in India—that of Mertins Bird and Thomason, in the North-West. He was a man of contemplation rather than of action, and it was perhaps well that he was so; for the two brothers—with all their high mental gifts—were pre-eminently men of action. Mansel thus served as a foil to them both, in a different sense from that in which they served as a foil to each other. He was admirably fitted to discover the weak points in any course of action which was proposed, and, with somewhat irritating impartiality, would argue with John in favour of Henry's views, and with Henry in favour of John's. He would thus throw the 'dry light of the intellect' on questions which might otherwise have been seen, owing either to the aristocratic leanings of Henry or the democratic leanings of John, through a too highly coloured medium. If he was not good at carrying out into action any views of his own, it is probable that the views of his colleagues, which they might have been anxious, in the exuberance of their energy, to carry out at once, often passed, owing to his idiosyncrasies, through a sifting process for which they were seldom the worse, and sometimes much the better.

The balance between the civil and military elements aimed at by Lord Dalhousie in the construction of the Board itself, was scrupulously observed also in the selection of those who were to work under it. Besides George Christian, the Secretary, upon whom John Lawrence had long fixed his eye, and Melvill, who was specially appointed by Lord Dalhousie to the post of Assistant-Secretary, there were to be four Commissioners for the four Divisions of the new province—Lahore, Jhelum, Mooltan, and Leia; while beneath them, again, came some fifty-two Deputy and Assistant-Commissioners, who were selected in as nearly as possible equal numbers from the civil and military services. 'You shall have,' wrote Lord Dalhousie to Henry Lawrence, in anticipation of the annexation, on February 26, 'the best men in India to help you—your brother John to begin with.' And he was as good as his word.

But, before I go on to describe the work done by the Board in

general, and, so far as it is possible to distinguish between man and man, the part in it borne by John Lawrence in particular, it will be well to give some slight notion of the size, the inhabitants, and the leading physical characteristics of the country which they were to administer, and which, so long as the world lasts, it may safely be predicted, will be bound up with the name of Lawrence.

The five magnificent streams—the Sutlej, the Beas, the Ravi, the Chenab, and the Jhelum—which have given the name of 'Punjab' to the country which they traverse, all rise amidst the snowy peaks of the Himalayas, all flow in the same general direction, north-east to south-west, and all are ultimately united in the vast bosom of the Indus. Each of the five tracts of country enclosed by these six rivers narrows gradually from north to south, and is known by the name of Doab (the two rivers). The Jullundur Doab, between the Sutlej and the Beas, is the richest and most peaceful of them all. It had been under John Lawrence's rule for two years past, and its principal features have been sufficiently described already. The Bari Doab, which comes next, between the Beas and the Ravi, is the most important, and, in its northern part at least, the most populous of the five. It contains the political capital of the whole country, Lahore; and the commercial and religious capital, Umritsur. It is the Manjha, or 'middle home' of the Sikh nation, which supplied the Sikh religion with its most revered Gurus; Runjeet's court with its most powerful Sirdars; and Runjeet's ever-victorious army with its most redoubtable warriors. Next, beyond the Bari Doab, between the Ravi and the Chenab, comes the Rechna Doab; and beyond it, again, between the Chenab and the Jhelum, the Jetch Doab, containing the most famous battle-fields of the war which was just over, Chillianwallah and Goojerat. Last, comes the Sind Saugar, or 'ocean of the Indus,' Doab—so called from the vast tracts of country exposed to the inundation of the river—the largest, the most thinly inhabited, and the most sterile of all.

Beyond the Indus, between it and the Suliman range, lies the Peshawur valley and the district of the three Deras, or 'camping-grounds,' of Afghan chiefs—Dera Ismael, Dera Futteh, and Dera Ghazi Khan, hence called the Derajat. It forms no part of the Punjab proper, but on the due arrangements for its defence depends, as we shall see hereafter, the security of the province, and so, of the whole of our Indian Empire.

For the width of a few miles on each side of the six rivers of the

Punjab there runs a fertile tract of country, the soil of which is irrigated by their superfluous waters, and bears abundant crops. But far richer, far more extensive, and far more blest in every way by nature than these narrow strips, is the belt of land which lies beneath the shadow of the Himalayas, and forms the northern portion of the three central Doabs. It has a comparatively temperate climate, a fair rainfall, innumerable streams and streamlets, the feeders of the great rivers; and it yields, with an outlay of little labour and of less skill, two abundant harvests in the year. If the whole of the Punjab were equal to this, its richest part, it might almost challenge comparison with Bengal. But this is far from being the case. For between the narrow belts of rich land, which owe their existence to the great rivers, there lie vast arid tracts which are covered, not with waving crops of corn or cotton, of indigo or tobacco, but with scanty and coarse grass, or with jungles of tamarisks and thorns. The soil is often impregnated with soda or salt; the heat is terrible; and the jungles are the haunt of wild beasts, or of wilder men, whose livelihood has been gained, from time immemorial, by cattle-lifting from the more cultivated districts.

The Punjab, therefore, is a country of extremes. One part of it is as populous as Bengal, in another there is hardly a human habitation to be seen; one part smiles as 'the garden of the Lord,' another is as bare and as barren as the deserts of Scinde or Rajpootana. The hill districts, with their mountain sanataria, from Murree away to Dalhousie, and thence to the Kangra valley, to Dhurmsala, or to Simla, are heavens upon earth, pleasant even in the hot season. The plains at Lahore, for instance, and at Mooltan, are almost insupportable to Europeans from the heat. When the followers of the Arabian prophet demurred to fighting beneath the full blaze of an Arabian sun, because it was so hot, the prophet replied that 'hell was hotter still,' and on they went to victory or death. But a European who is unlucky enough to find himself at Mooltan in the hot season, will be disposed rather to agree with the truth expressed in the native proverb: 'When God had Mooltan ready for His purpose, why did He make hell?'

The boundaries of the Punjab and of India are clearly marked out by the hand of Nature. On the north, the Himalayas give it an absolute security from Chinese or Tartar, or even Russian scares; while on the west, the range of the Suliman mountains, which runs parallel with the Indus, forms an almost equally impenetrable barrier.

It is true, indeed, that the Suliman range is traversed by passes which, under favourable circumstances, have given an entrance to the invading armies of Alexander the Great and Timour the Tartar, of Baber and Nadir Shah. But those conquerors were opposed by no foe worthy of the name. And, happily for us, here, again, range upon range rises behind the main mountain wall, and beyond these, once more, are 'wilds immeasurably spread,' which, being inhabited by races as rough, as wild, and as inhospitable as the soil on which they dwell, altogether form an all but impregnable protection to India. No better series of defences, indeed, scientific or natural, could possibly be desired against any foe who comes from beyond Afghanistan; and no strong foe, it should be remarked, can ever come from within it.

The only range of mountains within the limits of the Punjab is the Salt range, which, crossing the Indus at Kalabagh and stretching eastward to Pind Dadun Khan on the Jhelum, divides the Sind Saugar Doab into two parts. Commercially it is most important; for salt is one of the first requisites of life, and the supply it yields is quite unlimited. Salt-springs issue everywhere from its base, and at Kalabagh, in particular, produce a peculiarly picturesque effect, by encrusting with a snowy whiteness the blood-red rocks around. North of the Salt range is the hilly district of Rawul Pindi; and beyond that, again, the wildly mountainous country of Huzara, a country of crags and caves, the abode of mountain robbers who had levied black-mail on the surrounding peoples from the time of Alexander downwards, and had never yet been conquered by force or fraud, but were to yield now a willing obedience to the fatherly kindness of James Abbott, and his worthy successor, John Becher.

The races inhabiting the Punjab are as varied as are its physical features. The Sikhs proper, though they form the flower and the sinew of the population, are, it must always be remembered, only a fraction, perhaps a sixth part, of the whole. The aboriginal Goojurs and Gukkurs, together with the Rajpoots and other Hindu races, make up another sixth; and the remainder—the inhabitants, that is, of the Sind Saugar Doab, of the district round Mooltan, of Huzara, of Peshawur, and of the Derajat generally—are all, more or less, Mussulman. It must have given no slight satisfaction to the English conquerors of the Punjab, to reflect that, if they had swept away the famous empire of the Sikhs, they had, at least, given religious freedom and security from oppression to subject races who were four times as

numerous. The Sikhs were the bravest and most chivalrous race in India. They had done their best against us in two great wars, and they now seemed disposed to submit with manly self-restraint to our superior power, if only we used it with equity and toleration.

A more serious difficulty was to be found in those wild and warlike tribes which line our whole western frontier, from the north of Huzara right down to Scinde. These tribes had, for ages, carried on an internecine warfare with the more peaceful and settled inhabitants of the plains below, and the heirs to the rich inheritance of Runjeet Sing could hardly complain if they had to take the bad part of the bargain with the good. It needs only a glance at the position of Peshawur—the prize for which Afghan and Sikh have so often contended—with the Khyber frowning in its front, and with mountains enclosing it on three sides, all of them inhabited by tribes who have, from time immemorial, levied black-mail on all travellers passing through their territory, and have received the presents, the bribes, or the tribute of some of the greatest conquerors the world has seen, while they themselves have seldom paid toll or tax to any one—to see that the rich valley is a veritable apple of discord, for the possession of which those who hold it are likely to have to pay in the shape of large armaments, of chronic anxiety, of occasional retributory expeditions, and, once and again, unless wisdom holds the helm at Calcutta, of a distant and aggressive war in which victory may be even more disastrous than defeat.

And what is true of the Peshawur district is true also, in a less degree, of the whole frontier line beyond the Indus—of the valley of Kohat, for instance, which is only to be approached from Peshawur by two long and dangerous and waterless passes through the Afridi territory; of the valley of Bunnoo, which is only accessible from Kohat by just such another pair of passes; and so on, along the whole length of the Suliman range, with its robber-haunted defiles, and the champaign of the Derajat lying at its feet as its natural prey. Altogether, it was calculated that these frontier tribes could put into the field against us 100,000 men, all fanatical, all Mohammedans, all well armed, all excellent marksmen, and all inhabiting a country admirably adapted for their own predatory warfare, but very ill suited for regular military operations. The arrangements for the defence of such a frontier were delicate and difficult enough, but upon their adequacy, as I have said, depended the security of all the rest.

Such, then, was the general nature of the country, and such the chief characteristics of the people with whom the newly formed Punjab Board had to deal. It remains to ask how far its task was facilitated or hindered by any existing political or social institutions, in particular, by what the masterful government of Runjeet Sing had done or had left undone.

Runjeet was, without doubt, an able and vigorous ruler, but it was vigour and ability as men understand it in the East. A good army and a full exchequer were the two, and the only two, objects of his government. The stalwart frames and the martial and religious enthusiasm of his subjects ensured the one, and the intoxication of victory after victory and of province added to province by the Khalsa commonwealth, made them ready to put up with the abuses which supplied the other. The difficult question as to what articles of consumption are most suitable for taxation, and what are not, gave Runjeet Sing no trouble at all, for he laid taxes on all alike. Houses and lands, stored grain and growing crops, exports and imports, manufactures and the natural products of the soil, luxuries and necessities, all contributed their quota to the great cause. Powerful provincial governors like Sawun Mull and the local tax-gatherers, or kardars, were left free, provided that they remitted good round sums to Lahore, to squeeze their victims, and to feather their own nests pretty much as they liked. No statements of accounts were either expected or received from them by the Central Government. Runjeet's own account-book—the most natural one, perhaps, for a man who could neither read nor write—was a notched stick. The balance-sheet was the last thing in the world with which the paymaster of all the forces would have cared to trouble himself. We found when we annexed the country that no balance-sheet had been presented by him for sixteen years! Punishments were few and simple. Thefts or ordinary murders were atoned for by payment of a fine; crimes involving gross violence were punished by mutilation—the loss of the nose, the ears, or the hand; while the worst criminals of all were hamstrung. It was reserved for Avitabile, an Italian soldier of fortune, and ruler of the Peshawur district, to set the example of more barbarous punishments still. His rule was one of simple terror. He feared not God, neither regarded man. He revelled in extortion and in cruelty of every description. Those who opposed his relentless will he blew away from guns or turned out in the sun to die, naked and smeared with honey; others he ordered to be sawn asunder between two planks, or to be impaled

or flayed alive, sometimes, it is said, beginning the terrible operation with his own hands!

Of prisons there were few, and those few we found to be almost untenanted. The chief duty of Runjeet's police was not to prevent or to detect crime, but only to put down disorder and facilitate the movements of the army. Roads, in the proper sense of the word, there were none; public conveyances and bridges none; written law or special ministers of justice none; schools, except of the most elementary kind, none; hospitals and asylums, of course, none. If, therefore, the Board had very much to do they had little to undo. Henry Lawrence, helped by his assistants, had already, in his position as Resident, attacked the worst abuses, and had done something towards paying off the army, towards reforming the taxes, and putting a limit to the extortions of the tax-gatherers. And now, as President of the Board, with his brother John as his chief coadjutor, he was not likely to stop before he had finished the work to which he had put his hand, and had built up, in an astonishingly short space of time, that fair and firm political fabric which was to prove our surest support in the hour of need.

The first and one of the most difficult tasks which lay before the Board was the pacification of the country. The greater portion, indeed, of those gallant foes who had made us tremble for our empire at Ferozeshuhr and Chillianwallah had frankly recognised that our star was in the ascendant after the battle of Gujerat, and, on March 12, as I have already shown, had thrown down their swords in one vast pile, and had each, with two rupees in his pocket, returned to the plough whence he had originally come. It was now the turn of the few who had remained faithful to us during the struggle. Obedient to our summons, they mustered, together with the armed retinues of the old Sikh nobility, at Lahore. The old and invalided among them were pensioned off. The remainder obtained their long arrears of pay, and permission was given them, of which they were eventually to avail themselves largely, to re-enter our service.

We had thus disbanded the Sikh army. It remained to disarm the population and so to deprive them of the temptation to violent crime and disorder which the possession of arms always gives. The wearing of arms, as the history of Eastern Europe still shows, is a privilege as dearly prized by a semi-civilised as by a barbarous people, and is often necessary for the safety of the wearer. But peace, profound peace, was henceforward, as we hoped, to reign in the Punjab.

Accordingly, about six weeks after annexation, a proclamation ordering a general disarmament was everywhere placarded, and, strange to say, was everywhere obeyed. One hundred and twenty thousand weapons of every size and species, some of them much more dangerous to the wearer than to his foe, and ranging from the cannon or the rifle of the nineteenth century A.D., down to the quoit or the bows and arrows of the time of Porus and Alexander in the fourth century B.C., were voluntarily surrendered. The mountaineers of Huzara and of the Trans-Indus frontier were the only exceptions to the rule. They were allowed, and were not only allowed but enjoined, to retain their arms; for to have disarmed them, at this early period, would have been to lay them a defenceless prey at the feet of their neighbours across the border.

The duty of protecting the country which had been thus deprived of the natural guardians—or disturbers—of its peace, fell, as a matter of course, on the conquerors. To guard the dangerous frontier line it was arranged that ten regiments—five of cavalry and five of infantry—should be raised from the country itself; and people of various races—Hindustanis, Punjabis, and Mussulmans—responded cheerfully to the call. The Sikhs, it had been feared, might flock in dangerously large numbers to our standards. But it was they alone who hung back; and, for the moment, it seemed as though, contrary to all our principles, we should be obliged to hold the Punjab in check by a force from which the bravest of its inhabitants were practically excluded. This danger soon passed by. The Sikhs threw off their scruples, and, since then, they have rendered us valiant service whenever and wherever they have been called upon to do so. They have fought for us, with equal readiness, upon their own frontier, and in other parts of India, on the Irrawaddy, and on the Yang-tse-Kiang; they have borne their part in the victorious march on Magdala; they have dropped down, like an apparition, on the newly annexed island of Cyprus; and, more recently still, they have stood side by side with us before the ramparts of Tel-el-Kebir, and have joined us in the well-intentioned race for Cairo.

Within a year of their being raised, several of the Punjab irregular regiments shed their blood in our service, and, henceforward, they were seldom to shed it in any other cause. The Afridis, the Swattis, and other turbulent tribes beyond the frontier, learned that their more peaceable neighbours within it had now a formidable power behind them which could not be provoked with impunity, and began to put

some check on their predatory propensities. Three horse field-batteries, a camel corps stationed at Dera Ismael Khan, and the famous 'Guide Corps,' completed the moveable defences of the frontier.

But the 'Guide Corps' was so remarkable a body of men, and they will have to be so often mentioned hereafter, that it will be well to give at once some notion of their leading characteristics. The corps owed its origin to a suggestion thrown out by the fertile brain of Henry Lawrence, at the close of the first Sikh war. Originally it consisted of only two hundred and eighty men, horse and foot. But, in view of the increased duties which were now to be thrown upon it, its numbers were to be trebled. No more uncanny, and yet no more invaluable, body of men was ever got together. Like the Carthaginian army of old, which contained samples of every nation that the ubiquitous fleets of the great republic could reach, the Guide Corps contained, on a small scale, representatives of almost every race and every place, every language and every religion, which was to be found in the North and North-West of India. It contained men of every shade of moral character, and men of no character at all. The most cunning trackers, the most notorious cattle-lifters, the most daring freebooters, were enrolled in it, were subjected to a wholesome but not an over-strict discipline, were clothed in a brown uniform, so as to be indistinguishable, at a little distance, from the ground on which they moved, were privileged to receive a high rate of pay, and, within a very short space of time, were found to be ready 'to go anywhere or do anything.' 'Ready, aye ready!' might well have been their motto. Endurance, courage, sagacity, local knowledge, presence of mind—these were the qualities which marked a man out for the Guide Corps. On whatever point of the five hundred miles of our western frontier, with its score or more of savage tribes, operations had to be carried on, there were always to be found amongst the Guides men who could speak the language of the district in question, men who had threaded before, and, therefore, could now thread again, its most dangerous defiles, and could tell where the hostile encampment or the robber-haunted cavern lay. Thus the Guides, in a new but not an untrue sense of the word, formed the 'Intelligence Department' of the Punjab. These were the men for a daring reconnaissance, for a forced march, for a forlorn hope. Raised first by Lieutenant Harry Lumsden, they had already done good service in border fighting and in the second Sikh war. They were soon to serve under Sir Colin Campbell

against the Mohmunds, and their like, with unvarying success. Finally, they were to be the first of that splendid succession of reinforcements of which the Punjab was to denude itself in the day of peril and send with a God-speed down to Delhi. 'I am making,' said Henry Daly, their commander, as he started with alacrity on his honourable mission, 'and I intend to make, the best march that has been heard of in India.' And he was as good as his word. In twenty-two days, at the very hottest season of the year, he made a forced march of five hundred and eighty miles from Peshawur to Delhi; and his men came into camp, as they were described by an eye-witness, 'as firm and light of step as if they had marched only a mile.' What wonder that they were received with ringing cheers by the small besieging force, and were welcomed, not merely for what they were in themselves—a body which represented the loyalty and the energy of nearly every tribe of Upper India—but as an earnest of the reinforcements which the Punjab, with John Lawrence at the helm, and with such supporters as Montgomery, Nicholson, Edwardes, Chamberlain, and half a dozen other such at his side, was to pour forth, in quick succession, on the same hazardous errand?

The whole frontier force which I have described, was, after long discussion, made directly subject to the Board, and was placed under the command of Brigadier Hodgson. One portion, and only one, of the frontier line was deemed by Lord Dalhousie to be of such paramount importance for the protection of the Empire that it was reserved for the regular troops. This was the Peshawur Valley, which—with the Khyber, the direct passage to Afghanistan, and thence into Central Asia, in its front, and with the passage of the Indus directly in its rear—was to be guarded by a force of about 10,000 men, nearly 3,000 of them Europeans. The Board had already shown by its measures that it was alive to the truth of the Greek saying that 'men, and not walls, make a city;' but the number of men at their disposal was too small, the hostile mountains were too near, sometimes not a couple of miles from our boundary, to allow of such a merely Spartan rampart as was possible in other parts of our Indian frontier. Accordingly, they arranged that the most dangerous portion, from Huzara to Dera Ismael Khan, should be defended by forts of considerable size, which were to be rendered capable of standing a siege; that, below these, again, from the Tonk Valley down to Scinde, there should be a chain of smaller fortified posts at intervals of twelve miles apart; and that the whole should be connected together by a good military road, with

branches leading, on one side, towards the hostile mountains, and, on the other, towards the friendly river.

So skilful and so complete were these defensive arrangements, and so admirable was the forbearance and the knowledge of the native character—the resolution, the promptitude, and the dash of the officers who were chosen to carry them out, that, from that time forward, the peace of the Punjab was never seriously threatened from without. The warlike preparations of the Board were thus all made, not with a view to war, but, as all warlike preparations ought to be made, with a view to peace; not for aggression, but for defence; not with a view to a 'forward' or a 'backward' policy, but with a determination to stand firmly placed where they were against all comers. And I have purposely described these frontier arrangements first, not because they are the most prominent feature of the Punjab administration, but because, owing to their complete success, they are the least so. They were the essential conditions of all the rest, and the less we hear of them after they had once been set going, the more sure we may feel that their object was attained. The 'Wardens of the Marches,' chosen by the Lawrences for these posts of danger and difficulty, George Lawrence and Reynell Taylor, Nicholson and Edwardes, Abbott and Becher, Keyes and Pollock, the Lumsdens and the Chamberlains, were, all of them, picked men and pre-eminently fitted for their work, a work as modest as it was heroic. They only want their historian. In any case, so well was their work done—the work of defence not defiance, of civilisation not conquest—during the period most identified with the name and fame of John Lawrence, that his biographer, forgetting the triumphs of war in the more grateful and enduring triumphs of peace, can afford, after he has indicated the general character of the frontier they had to guard, and the general principles on which they did so, to let them almost pass out of sight, recurring to them only at those rare intervals when exceptional dangers brought them into exceptional prominence, and showed that they were able to cope with the need.

The country having been disarmed, and the frontier rendered secure, the next object of the Board was to provide for the detection and prevention of crime. To meet these ends, they raised two large bodies of police, the one preventive, with a military organisation, the other detective. The preventive police were 8,000 in number, horse and foot, many among whom had done good service to the late Durbar, and had remained faithful to us in the Sikh war. Their duty was to furnish guards for treasuries, jails, and outposts, to patrol the roads—

as much as there should be any roads to patrol—and to follow up gangs of marauders, should any such appear or reappear in the nearly pacified province. The other body, numbering 7,000 men, and divided amongst some 230 police districts (thannahs), was to be employed in the detection of crime, in the guarding of ferries, and in the collecting of supplies for troops or of boats for the passage of the rivers.

With a wise trustfulness in its instruments, the Board left to the native revenue collectors, called *tahsildars*, large powers in the way of organising and controlling these police, thus utilising the local knowledge which they, and they alone, possessed. The native village watchmen, who formed an integral part of the old village system and were paid by the villagers themselves, were also carefully maintained by officers who had learned the priceless value of the village communities in the North-West.

Special precautions were required in those districts which were most infested by criminals. The Peshawur valley, for instance, was a nest of assassins, in which crimes of violence had always been the order of the day. Any hollow of the ground, any gully, above all any tomb of a Mussulman saint, might, not improbably, harbour some desperate cutthroat. The centres of the Doabs, again, which were covered with jungle, or brushwood, or tracts of long grass, had been, as I have already mentioned, from time immemorial, a very sanctuary of cattle-lifters and their spoil. In these natural fastnesses whole herds of oxen which had been driven off from the richer lands near the river might graze and wander at pleasure, and yet lie impenetrably concealed from their former owners. Foolish, indeed, would any villager be who dared to penetrate such a Cyclops' den in order to recover what its wild inhabitants deemed to be theirs by a right at least as sacred as his! The chance of finding his cattle would be small, and his chance of his escaping with them or with his life would be smaller still. It was not the nature of the Punjabi to throw away good money after bad, and so the great central Doabs were peopled, like the Aventine of old, by hundreds of Cacuses who had never, till the time of the British occupation, found any reason to fear a Hercules.

How did the Board deal with these districts? Round the city of Peshawur they drew cordon behind cordon of police posts. They filled in the ravines and hollows and spread a network of roads over the adjoining district. In the Doabs, which had never yet been crossed by anything but a camel track, roads were cut in various

directions, mounted patrols of police sent along them, and, more important than all, professional trackers were employed—men of whose amazing skill John Lawrence had again and again availed himself in the pursuit of criminals at Delhi, at Paniput, and at Gurgaon; men whose senses had been sharpened by natural or artificial selection to a preternatural degree of acuteness; who could discern a footprint, invisible to the ordinary eye, in the hardest clay; who could follow a track of harried cattle through the wildest jungle and the roughest grass for, perhaps, some fifty miles, naming beforehand the number of the men and of the animals in the party, till, at last, they carried the trail, triumphantly, to some remote encampment, where their uncanny skill was proved to ocular demonstration.

But cattle-stealing was by no means the worst crime with which the Board had to deal. Dacoity, or robbery in gangs, had been bound up with the whole course of Punjab history. The Sikhs had been cradled in it; it had grown with their growth; and, as in many analogous periods of European history, it was the most successful gang robber who, after winning by his trusty sword large quantities of money or of cattle, usually ended by carving out for himself, in much the same manner, broad estates or powerful principalities. The leader of a band of free-lances had thus little reason to be ashamed of his occupation. The bluest blood to be found in the Punjab often flowed in his veins, and his profession did as much honour to him as he to his profession. Kept within bounds by the strong hand of Runjeet Sing, or rather given ample occupation by his foreign conquests, Dacoity had taken a new lease of life in the anarchy which followed his death; and when his army was finally broken up by us, it was only natural that the bolder spirits who could not, or would not, enter our service, should betake themselves to so time-honoured a practice. The districts of Lahore and Umritsur began to swarm with them. But strong precautions and wholesome severity soon checked the evil. During the first year, thirty-seven Dacoits were condemned to death in Umritsur alone; in the second year, the number fell to seven; and, in a few years more, the crime ceased to exist throughout the Punjab.

But there was a more insidious crime, the existence of which seems, at first, to have been quite unsuspected in the Punjab. The prevalence of Thuggee in other parts of India had only been discovered a few years previously. But the weird practices connected with it, the religious initiation, the patient plotting, the cool cruelty, the consummate skill, and the professional enthusiasm of the actors,

had already given to it a world-wide celebrity. Colonel Sleeman had tracked its mysteries through all their windings, and Colonel Meadows Taylor has, since then, laid them bare to the world in a well-known story, which does not overstate the facts of the case.

The discovery of corpses by the side of wells or in the jungles, after the Dacoits had pretty well been exterminated, first aroused a suspicion that other confraternities of death might be found within our limits. Dead men tell no tales, and the Thugs of Hindustan had been much too skilful ever to leave their work half-done. No half-throttled traveller had ever escaped from their hands to tell the tale of the fellow-travellers who had joined him on his road, had wormed themselves into his confidence, had questioned him of his welfare, and then, as he sat at food with them by the wayside, had with one twist of the fatal handkerchief, attempted to give him a short shrift. But the Punjab Thug was a mere bungler in his business. The fine art had only recently been imported into his country from Hindustan, and its first professor had been discovered and straightway hung up by Runjeet Sing. His successors often made up for their want of skill in the use of the handkerchief, by hacking their victim to pieces with their swords, and then, instead of pitching his body, still warm, into the grave which they had opened while he was talking to them, they would carelessly leave it to rot by the wayside. At last a Brahmin, who had been two-thirds strangled and left for dead, recovered and told his tale. The clue was followed up. Rewards were offered for the detection of Thugs, a free pardon was promised to those who might turn Queen's evidence, and a special officer was appointed for the investigation. A list of recent victims, two hundred and sixty-four in number, was soon given in by approvers. A second list of professional Thugs, given in by the same authorities, was published and posted everywhere. Many of these were apprehended, and their confessions taken. Others disappeared altogether. The approver would often conduct the British officer for miles through the jungle without any apparent clue which could guide him in his search or refresh his memory. 'Dig here,' 'Dig there,' he would say, as he came to a sudden stop in his tortuous course; and the turning up of a few spadefuls of soil revealed the corpse or the skeleton of one of his victims. Along one bit of by-path fifty-three graves were thus opened and were all found to be tenanted. One Thug was questioned as to the number of his victims. His professional pride was touched, and with true enthusiasm he replied, 'How can I tell?

Do you remember, Sahib, every animal you have killed in the chase! Thuggee is our sport, our *shikar*!'[1]

The Thugs of the Punjab were found to belong chiefly to the Muzbi or sweeper caste. They were as superstitious as they were bungling and cruel. A cry of a bird or beast of ill-omen could turn from its purpose a heart which no pang of pity or of remorse could ever reach. A thousand of these Muzbis paid, within a few years, the penalty of their misdeeds. They had been treated by the Sikhs as outcasts, and it is little wonder if they soon became so. It was the object of the Punjab Board, if they could not overcome the sentiment which lay at the bottom of the caste feeling, at least to make the existence of those miserable creatures more tolerable, and, by a strict system of supervision and of employment, to turn them into decent members of society. They were employed for several years to come on those two great material triumphs of the Punjab Administration, to be described hereafter—the Bari Doab Canal and the Grand Trunk Road. And, in the Mutiny, when a cry was raised at Delhi for sappers and miners, it was these selfsame outcasts who were selected by John Lawrence for the purpose, and who did admirable service to our cause both at Delhi and at Lucknow. To have reclaimed these men, and to have put down for ever, in a marvellously short space of time, two such evils as Dacoity and Thuggee, is no slight credit to the Punjab Board, and no slight gain to the cause of humanity.

A cognate subject, and one which would naturally come next to the suppression of Dacoity and Thuggee, is that of female infanticide. But of this I have already said something, and its suppression in the four Doabs belongs rather to the Chief-Commissionership of John Lawrence, who had been the first to strike a blow at it in the Jullundur Doab, than to the period of the Board.

In dealing with the subject of crime, the Lawrence brothers did not lose sight of the secondary object of punishment—the reformation of the criminal. Runjeet's simple alternative of fine or mutilation had, certainly, never been open to the charge of overstocking his prisons. His system had placed not more than two hundred criminals in durance. Ours was to place ten thousand. But these, instead of being mutilated, or chained to a post in the streets, or placed at the bottom of a dry well, were subjected to a system of strict discipline

[1] Arnold's *Dalhousie*, vol. i. p. 259.

indeed, and hard work, but were decently clothed, fed, and housed, and were taught the rudiments of education, and of a trade. New jails, twenty-five in number, of different sizes and models, were erected in the different Districts subject to the Punjab Board. The great central jail at Lahore was built on the newest model, with a view to economy and health, as well as the supervision, the classification, and the moral improvement of the prisoners. Thus John Lawrence was able, with the energetic help of Dr. Charles Hathaway, who was now appointed Inspector of Prisons, to carry out the improvements in the system which he had long since indicated as desirable.

As regards legislation, the customs of the natives were, as far as possible, taken as the basis of the law. The Board knew well, as one of the sages of antiquity has remarked, that 'good customs are of even greater importance than good laws,' in fact, that the one are only efficacious in so far as they are the outcome and the representative of the other. Accordingly, a code of native customs was drawn up. Those which were absolutely bad and seemed to be incapable of improvement were forbidden. Those which related to marriage and divorce, and tended, as they do in most Eastern countries, to the degradation of the female sex, were, first, modified and then accepted. Those which related to such subjects as inheritance and adoption were incorporated at once. The *Tahsildars*, whose local knowledge marked them out as the best judges of local matters of small importance, were confirmed in their judicial, as they had already been in their police authority. Each village, or group of adjoining villages, thus retained a court of its own sanctioned by immemorial custom, and though the right of appeal to the Deputy-Commissioner was reserved, yet a large portion of all matters in dispute could always be settled within its precincts. It should be added, that the English officers of all grades were bound by the spirit rather than by the letter of the regulations, and all acted on the principle so dearly cherished in the East, that, if it is not possible to eliminate all mistakes in the administration of justice, it is at least possible to avoid undue delays.

But none of these reforms could be accomplished without a proper settlement of the revenue, and in particular of that item on which it mainly depends—the land-tax. The land-tax is that varying share of the produce of the soil which is claimed by Government as its own. Under native governments it is generally paid in kind, and is levied, harvest by harvest, by ill-paid officials, who are apt to take

too little from the cultivator if he bribes them sufficiently, too much if he does not. And, in either case, a large part of the amount, instead of finding its way into the coffers of the State, stops short in the pocket of the tax-gatherers. Under the system introduced by the English, a low average of the produce of a district was taken on the returns of several years together, and then, the money value of the Government share was taken at another low average of current prices. All parties gained by this arrangement, but, most of all, the cultivator himself. The saving was great in every way; for the estimate was taken once in ten, twenty, or thirty years, instead of twice or three times in one year, while extortion and other abuses were rendered almost impossible. If the English Government had conferred no other benefit on India than this, it would have done much to justify its existence.

The varieties of land tenure were numerous and complicated, but they were time-honoured; and it was the honourable mission of the Board, in no case, to destroy, but only to revivify and to preserve. The land-tax had, in Runjeet's time, amounted to half the gross produce, and had, generally, been paid in kind. This payment in kind—not without strong protests on the part of the tax-payers—was abolished by us, and its amount reduced to a half or to a quarter of what it had been before. Nor did the State suffer much by the remission, for the revenues of Mooltan, which had become an integral part of the Punjab, and of other outlying parts, were flowing freely into our Treasury, and our receipts were further swollen by the abolition of the illicit profits of the tax-collectors, and by the confiscation of the property of rebellious jagheerdars.

The financial policy of the Board was liberal throughout. The forty-seven articles taxed by the lynx-eyed Runjeet had already been cut down to twenty by Henry Lawrence; but to secure the payment even of this diminished number of duties, it had been found necessary to retain Runjeet's cordon of preventive lines all round the frontier. Transit duties and tolls had been levied by Runjeet at every possible point within the Punjab. A piece of merchandise crossing the country had to pay duty some twelve times over! On January 1, 1850—only ten months, that is, after annexation—all town and transit dues, all export and import duties, were swept away. The preventive frontier line was abolished, and trade was left free to flow in its natural channels. To balance these reductions, an excise, desirable in every point of view, was levied on spirits; stamp duties were intro-

duced; tolls at the chief ferries over the large rivers were authorised; and a tax—necessary under the circumstances, but not theoretically free from objection, since it was laid on a necessity of life—was imposed on salt. The vast stores of this mineral to be found in the Salt range were, henceforward, to be managed by Government itself; and, to render the revenue accruing from it secure, the importation of salt from all neighbouring districts was prohibited. It was the one blot on an otherwise excellent fiscal system. But the natives did not object to it, and found it no burden.

If the prosperity of the country did not seem to increase with a bound, as the result of all these arrangements, it was not the fault of the Government but of circumstances which were beyond its control. There were three rich harvests after annexation. The soldiers of the Khalsa betook themselves to the plough or to the spade; and agriculture, encouraged by the lowered land-tax, and by the peace and security of the country, spread over tracts which had never before been broken up. There was thus a glut of agricultural produce in the markets, while there was, as yet, no ready means of disposing of it. The cultivators found difficulty in paying even the reduced land-tax. A cry arose for further remissions, and under a Government which was generous, but not lavish, it was a cry that was not raised in vain. Thus, the discontent which was the accidental result of the improved condition of the country tended to make the inhabitants more prosperous still. Happy the country and happy the people that were in such a case!

I have spoken of the jails erected by the Board throughout the Punjab, and of the line of forts along its western frontier; but there were other public buildings and other public works, which, if they were less urgently required at the outset of our rule, were not less essential for its permanence and its success. What we vaguely call 'the development of the resources of the country'—a country, in some parts, so blessed by nature and so neglected by man—required a department, or at least a ruling spirit, to itself; and Lord Dalhousie, who had promised Henry Lawrence to give him 'the best men in the country,' was true to his word, in this, as in other particulars. For he gave him as 'Civil Engineer' the best man who could have been found at that time, perhaps the best who could have been found at any time, in India, for the purpose. Colonel Robert Napier had acted as Consulting Engineer to Henry Lawrence during the Residency; he had traversed the country for himself from end to end, and he was

well acquainted with its capabilities and its wants. More than this, he was a man of vast ideas. He had something in him of the 'great-souled' man of Aristotle—the *beau idéal*, as the whole of his subsequent career has proved him to be, of chivalry and generosity. If a thing was to be done well, and without a too close calculation of the cost, Napier was the man to do it. His ideas found expression in those splendid public works which are the pride of the Punjab, and are still a model for the rest of India.

An efficient staff was placed at Napier's disposal; first and foremost, Lieutenant Alexander Taylor, whose name will come before us in more than one striking scene hereafter, and who was able to secure the warm affection of men so widely different from each other as Napier and Nicholson, as Henry and John Lawrence. Funds fairly adequate to the occasion were placed at the Chief Engineer's disposal, and special grants were to be made for works of imperial magnitude, such as the Grand Trunk Road and the great canals. But roads and canals are not made in a day, and, in such matters, the work of the Board was, necessarily, one of preparation rather than of completion, of struggles under difficulties rather than of victory over them. Yet, even in this early period, roads were not only projected and surveyed, but were actually constructed. In the map prepared in Napier's office and appended to the first Punjab report, a perfect network of roads—military roads, roads for external and internal commerce, cross and branch roads in every direction—some of them, merely proposed or surveyed, others traced or completed, may be seen spreading over the country, like the veins and arteries over the human body.

A single sentence of this same Punjab report thus sums up what had been done in the way of road-making, during the first three years of our possession: '1,349 miles of road,' it says, 'have been cleared and constructed; 853 miles are under construction, 2,487 miles have been traced, and 5,272 miles surveyed, all exclusive of minor cross and branch roads.' The Romans were the great road-makers of antiquity, and it is one of their crowning glories that they were so. But the Grand Trunk Road from Calcutta to Peshawur may, in the difficulties which it overcame, in the way it overcame them, and in the benefits it has conferred, challenge comparison with the greatest triumphs of Roman engineering skill, with the Appian Way, which united Rome with Brundusium, and the Flaminian, which united it with Ariminum. Nor need the character and career of Robert Napier shrink from comparison with all that is best either in that of the great censor Appius,

or of the Consul Flaminius, the generous foe of aristocratic privilege and chicanery, and the constructor of the splendid Circus and the Road which immortalise his name.

More had been done by previous Governments for the development of the Punjab in the way of canals than in that of roads. The Moguls, who were magnificent in all they undertook, had especially distinguished themselves in this particular. The Mooltan district had been intersected with canals, and the native system, which compelled each village to pay its share of labour, or of money, towards keeping them in repair was found by Napier to be so fair and efficacious that he was content to 'leave well alone.' In the north of the Bari Doab, again, a canal known as the Husli or Shah-i-nahr, 'the royal canal,' had been carried from the point where the Ravi leaves the mountains—a distance of 110 miles—to Lahore. It was a grand work. But it fertilised no wastes and called into existence no villages. It simply supplied the royal waterworks, conservatories, and fountains at the palace of Lahore. Accordingly, another great work was proposed by the Board, which is as characteristic of the aims of the English Government in India, as the Husli Canal had been of the Native. Starting from precisely the same point in the Ravi—as though to emphasise the contrast—a canal was projected, which, passing near the towns of Denanuggur, Batala, and Umritsur, should traverse the whole length of the Bari Doab, should send forth from the upper part of its course, into districts which specially needed it, three branches, each of them from sixty to eighty miles long; should refill the empty reservoirs and disused watercourses of the great southern waste, calling into existence everywhere new villages, and resuscitating those which had fallen into decay, till, after a course of 247 miles, it rejoined the Ravi above Mooltan. The new canal would, necessarily, be the work of many years, but it was begun in faith, and was all but accomplished in the Chief Commissionership of John Lawrence. The 'father of history,' in his ever fresh and vivid account of Egypt, struck by the wonder-working power of its life-giving river, invests it with personality throughout. The whole land of Egypt is, he says, 'the gift of the river'; the river is 'industrious,' 'benevolent,' 'takes this or that into its head,' 'wills this or does not will' that. But the terms in which Herodotus speaks of the river Nile and of the indwelling river-god he might have applied now, with a hardly greater infusion of metaphor, to the rivers of the Punjab and to the philanthropic statesmen who, by means of scores of canals and hundreds of watercuts and watercourses,

have so twisted and turned them as to revivify deserts and to scatter plenty over a, comparatively, smiling land.

I have now glanced at the most important subjects which called for the immediate attention of the Board. But there were others of which less energetic rulers would have postponed all consideration till the pressure upon them was less intense. The diversity of the coinages of the country was one difficulty which presented itself; the diversity of languages, a second; the diversity of weights and measures, a third. The want of a system of education and of a system of agriculture; the want of forest trees, of sanitary measures, and of sanataria,—all these subjects demanded and received their due share of attention. A few lines on each of them must suffice, in order to complete the outline of the Lawrence brothers' administration.

In the strange intermixture of coinages and languages to be found in the Punjab, it would be possible to trace the successive waves of foreign conquest and the internal convulsions which have passed over the country. To coin money is the attribute of kingly power everywhere, but nowhere so exclusively so as in the East. Accordingly, the first thing which any conqueror or upstart provisional governor does, is to strike off a coinage of his own. Thus it came about that, in the Leia Division alone, twenty-eight different coins were found to be in circulation, and that the rupee of Kashmere was worth barely two-thirds of that of the Company, whilst this last, again, was inferior in purity and value to the old Nanuk Shahi rupee, the symbol of the Sikh religion and power, which was coined at Umritsur and Lahore. Nor was this the worst; for of the Nanuk Shahi rupee itself there were not less than thirty varieties in circulation! The commercial confusion, the illicit gains, the losses on exchange resulting from such a state of things can be imagined. All the illiterate classes must have suffered, and only the coiners, the money-changers, and, possibly, the Sirdars, have thriven. Here was a case for prompt interference on our part. The dead coinages were called in. They were sent to Bombay and Calcutta to be melted down, and their equivalent was remitted to the Punjab, stamped with the mark, not of the Great Guru, or the Great Mogul, but of the English Queen. The coinage of the country was thus made to harmonise with accomplished facts, and, within three years, three-fourths of the whole revenue paid into the British treasury was found to be in British coin.

The languages of the Punjab were equally confusing. The Gourmooki, or sacred language of the Grunth, or Sikh scriptures, was, like Sanskrit, written rather than spoken. But there was a sufficient variety of spoken languages. In the two westernmost Doabs, Persian, or dialects derived from it, were current; in the easternmost, Punjabi, a corrupt form of Urdu. In one of the Indus districts, Pushtu was spoken; in another Beluchi. The difficulty of establishing a settled government and administering justice amidst this Babel of languages was great. But it would hardly have been lessened by any arbitrary attempt—letting alone the question of its justice—to force, as the Russians have done in Poland, any one official language upon the whole. An arrangement was ultimately come to that Urdu should be the official language of the eastern and Persian of the western half of the Punjab, and this compromise has been found to work well.

As regards education, the work of the first three years was chiefly preparatory. The first thing to be done was to ascertain what steps had been taken by natives in that direction; and Robert Montgomery —a name mentioned here for the first time in connection with the Punjab, but henceforward almost as closely bound up with it as that of the Lawrences themselves—threw himself into the work with alacrity. To his surprise and pleasure, it was discovered that, throughout the Punjab, there were elementary schools for all classes, Sikh, Mussulman, and Hindu; that the agricultural classes, unlike those of other parts of India, resorted to them in at least as large numbers as the higher castes, Rajpoots, Brahmins, or Khuttries; and, more remarkable still, that even female education, which is quite unknown in other parts of the peninsula, was not altogether neglected. In Lahore, for instance, there were sixteen schools for girls, with an average of six scholars in each, and, what is still more noteworthy, all of them were Muslims. In fact, there was a general desire for education. The standard aimed at in these native schools was, of course, not high. The staple of the education was the reading and recitation of the sacred volume accepted by each creed, supplemented by a little writing and arithmetic—enough, at all events, to enable the Sikh to calculate his compound interest with accuracy, and to make him a good village accountant. The buildings were of the most primitive kind. A temporary shed or tent, or the enclosure of some mosque or temple, sufficed for the purpose. Sometimes there was nothing but the shade of a spreading tree. The stipend of the

teacher was precarious enough, and was eked out by presents of grain or sweetmeats from the pupils or their parents. The members of the Board were unable, at this early date, to elaborate any extensive educational schemes, but they scrupulously respected all existing educational endowments, and they proposed to found a central school in each city of the Punjab. That at Umritsur was of a more ambitious character. It was to be divided into as many departments as there were religions or languages in the country. By the end of the second year after annexation, it contained 153, and at the end of the fourth year 308, scholars. A race of young Punjabis, it was hoped, were thus being trained up who might be trusted with the more or less important posts under Government which were then in the hands of Hindustanis.

The want of forest trees was met, so far as it could be so, by orders that all existing forests should be carefully preserved, that groves should be planted round public buildings, at intervals along the main lines of road, and in continuous lines throughout the course of the great canals. Thus some shade and timber were secured for coming generations, while, with a view to firewood, which is all-important in a country destitute of coal, the vast jungles, whence the woodcutters used, with reckless improvidence, to tear up whole bushes, were to be replanted and carefully tended. The famous grass preserves, the best of whose produce had been appropriated by the very Sirdars who were paid to look after them, while Runjeet's cavalry, for which they were intended, got only the refuse, were committed to the care of a special English officer, Edward Prinsep, who took measures that the State should, henceforward, get its own.

The proper rotation of crops was a subject little understood, and less practised, by a people who, careless of the future, are content if they can live from hand to mouth and, when they can no longer do that, are only too content to die. It was observed that one of the first results of the remission of taxation was that cereals were planted everywhere by the short-sighted cultivators of the ground. There was, consequently, a glut in the market of this kind of produce, while the land itself suffered proportionately. To meet this evil, cotton, tobacco, flax, sugar-cane, and root crops were introduced, on an extensive scale, into the Punjab, by the direct intervention of the Board, and with great success. The country was already well stocked with mulberry-trees, and the cultivation of the silkworm, which was encouraged by the Board, soon gave it a trade of its own. Fifty new

species of forest trees were planted in the tracts set apart for woodlands, and the tea-plant, which had been introduced by Thomason and his assistants into the North-Western Provinces, was now introduced into the Murri hills and the slopes of the far-famed Kangra valley. A new region was thus thrown open to a new commerce, and to a commerce which, unlike that of opium, is of a wholly unobjectionable kind.

In the unadulterated East, sanitary precautions are entirely neglected. The streets of even splendid cities are unpaved, undrained, and uncleansed. The carcasses of animals are left to rot where they die, and the suburbs are worse even than the cities. They are veritable Gehennas, the 'heaps' or 'mounds' of the Bible, and form the invariable surroundings of an Eastern town. Hence the foul air, the polluted water, the frequent pestilences, and, when once the European has introduced the appalling idea of statistics to the Eastern mind, what are, at length, discovered to be the still more appalling death-rates of Eastern cities. Lahore, which was deemed worthy by Milton of a place in the world-wide panorama displayed to our great parent by the angel, enjoyed a bad pre-eminence in these respects. The English troops, encamped in one of its suburbs, amidst the dilapidated houses and the pestilential deposits of successive generations, were the first to feel the Nemesis of offended nature. And the first steps towards sanitary improvement only made the evil worse. Science can hardly get rid of the germs of disease from such a hotbed without first stirring them into unwonted activity. But the exertions of a few years procured a clean bill of health even in so fever-haunted a region. Lahore was metamorphosed, in a sanitary point of view, by the exertions of George Macgregor, and Umritsur by those of C. B. Saunders, its magistrate. And if, as was inevitable, they both lost, in the process, something of the charm and picturesqueness of an Eastern city, the health and happiness and well-being of their inhabitants were vastly increased.

Nor was the Board content to be, in these matters, simply a paternal government. It has often been said that the best possible government for Orientals is a benevolent despotism—a government, that is, in which everything is done for the people, and nothing by them. But such was not the ideal set before themselves by the Lawrences. The English magistrate was naturally the moving spirit in each city, but associated with him there was to be a Town Council, elected by the natives from their own body, and when once the first

impulse had been given they worked with a will in the right direction. The first germs of municipal government were thus planted in a not altogether uncongenial soil.

The establishment of sanataria in the hills proceeded *pari passu* with the sanitary measures taken in the plains. A sanatarium for the troops quartered at the great stations of Peshawur, Rawul Pindi, and Jhelum was established in 1851 on the beautiful hills of Murri. It is a place which will be often mentioned in this biography, for it was amidst its cool breezes, during the next eight years, that overburdened Punjab officials snatched the hard-earned period of comparative repose which might fit them for still harder work to come. A second sanatarium, intended for the Punjab Irregular Force, was built on the Budawodeen Mount across the Indus; and a third, intended for the cantonments of Lahore and Sealkote, was sought and found amidst the Chumba hills. This last, on the proposal of the Lawrences, took, as it well might, the name of the Governor-General under whose master spirit they were content to think and work. At the same time, dispensaries were established at all the leading stations in the country. The superintendence of these institutions was to be confided to natives who had received a European education. Eastern patients generally have more belief in amulets and incantations than in drugs and prescriptions, and when we remember the absolute ignorance of Eastern practitioners, we may think it fortunate that it is so. But the Punjabi was willing to take from a native doctor drugs which he would have refused at the hand of a European; and it was hoped that, when he had once convinced himself of the good to be got from European medicines, it would not be long before he was able to trust the Europeans also who prepared them.

Of the smaller benefits conferred on the Punjab, such as a postal system, the protection given to natives against unfair impressment of their draught cattle or their carts, the improved working of the salt mines, the care taken to keep in repair the historical monuments of the country, it is unnecessary here to speak. Enough has been said to show that the Lawrences thought nothing to be above, nothing beneath, their notice; that their object was to find out everything which could be done, never to find excuses for leaving anything undone. And, if any of the details to which I have referred in this general sketch of the Punjab administration seem to any one to be of small importance, I answer that it has been well said that perfection is made up of trifles, but that perfection itself is no trifle.

It only remains to be added that the Punjab 'paid:' an all-important consideration this, when we bear in mind the poverty of the inhabitants of India. It is, of course, true that the balance-sheet of a great empire is not always to be scrutinised as though it were the balance-sheet of a commercial firm, and that a heroic disregard of finance may occasionally prove, in the end, to be not only the truest wisdom but the best economy. But, owing to the exertions of the Board, and in an especial degree, it must be added, to the financial genius of John Lawrence, the administration of the Punjab—even when the task before it was nothing less than the reconstruction of the whole country, and when that reconstruction was proceeding at a railroad pace—could stand the strictest of commercial tests. Not to speak of the balance-sheets of the first three years, which showed a surplus of fifty-two, sixty-four, and seventy lacs of rupees respectively —for this surplus was, in part, the result of the confiscation of jagheers, and of the sale of State property—in the fourth year, when these exceptional receipts had almost disappeared and the colossal expense of the Grand Trunk Road and the Great Canal had begun to make itself felt, there was still a surplus of fifty-three lacs. The Board did not disguise from themselves or from their superiors that, in the spirit of a munificent and far-seeing landlord, they contemplated an ever-increasing expenditure during the next ten years on these public works. But, with just confidence, they held that such an expenditure would be reproductive, and that, even during the ten years of leanness which must precede many decades of plenty, there would still be a surplus of twelve lacs per annum. These anticipations, however sanguine they might seem, were justified by the result. Constant reductions were made in the land settlement, and yet the revenue went on increasing. The 134 lacs of revenue of the year of annexation (1849) had risen, by the year of the mutiny (1857), to 205 lacs. In that year of agony, the Chief Commissioner not only raised this large sum, by methods which are usually practicable only in the time of peace, but was actually able from the surplus to send off twenty lacs in hard cash to Delhi!

It was to little purpose that the critics of the Punjab administration pointed to the large army of 50,000 men stationed within the limits of the province, and insisted that the whole expense attending it should be charged to the Punjab account; for Lord Dalhousie triumphantly retorted that the military force which would have been required if our frontier had still been the Sutlej, would not have been

appreciably less than that which was required to defend the line of the Suliman mountains. It was only the excess—an excess consisting, as he pointed out, of not more than two European regiments—which could fairly be charged to the Punjab accounts.

But even if the Punjab had not 'paid,' it would still, looking at the results achieved, have been an extraordinary success. In this very imperfect world, it is not always, nor indeed often, that the cost of a war is proportioned to its justice or injustice. But it is not unsatisfactory to observe that the two Sikh wars which were forced upon us, and were essentially defensive, over and above the enormous moral benefits which they have conferred upon the conquered people, have proved, financially also, a success; while the two Afghan wars, which were essentially aggressive, and which history has already branded with the stamp of egregious folly as well as of injustice, have proved as disastrous financially as they deserved to be. The finances of India, as a whole, have hardly yet recovered from the blunders and the crimes of the first Afghan war. When will they recover from the second?

I can hardly conclude this account of the administration of the Punjab Board better than by making three quotations—one from the last paragraph of the first Punjab report, to which it owes so much; the second from Lord Dalhousie's comments upon it; and the third from the reply of the Directors at home.

In a spirit of just self-appreciation, equally removed from false modesty and from pride, the Board thus sum up their labours for the past and their hopes for the future:—

> The Board have endeavoured to set forth the administration of the Punjab since annexation, in all its branches, with as much succinctness as might be compatible with precision and perspicuity. It has been explained how internal peace has been preserved, and the frontier guarded; how the various establishments of the State have been organised; how violent crime has been repressed, the penal law executed, and prison discipline enforced; how civil justice has been administered; how the taxation has been fixed, and the revenue collected; how commerce has been set free, agriculture fostered, and the national resources developed; how plans for future improvement have been projected; and, lastly, how the finances have been managed. The Most Noble the Governor-General, who has seen the country and personally inspected the executive system, will judge whether this administration has fulfilled the wishes of the Government; whether the country is richer; whether the people are happier and better. A great revolution cannot happen with-

out injuring some classes. When a State falls, its nobility and its supporters must, to some extent, suffer with it; a dominant sect and party, ever moved by political ambition and religious enthusiasm, cannot return to the ordinary level of society and the common occupations of life, without feeling some discontent and some enmity against their powerful but humane conquerors. But it is probable that the mass of the people will advance in material prosperity and moral elevation under the influence of British rule. The Board are not unmindful that in conducting the administration they had before them the Indian experience of many successive Governments, and especially the excellent example displayed in the North-Western Provinces. They are not insensible of shortcomings, but they will yet venture to say that this retrospect of the past does inspire them with a hope for the future.

(Signed) HENRY M. LAWRENCE, President.
JOHN LAWRENCE, Senior Member.
ROBERT MONTGOMERY, Junior Member.

Lahore: August 19, 1852.

Lord Dalhousie, after a lengthened comment on the report, writes as follows, and there will be few who will not endorse his deliberate judgment :—

For this prosperous and happy result, the Honourable Company is mainly indebted to the members of the Board of Administration—Sir Henry Lawrence, Mr. John Lawrence, Mr. Mansel, and his successor, Mr. Montgomery. I desire on my own part to record, in the most emphatic manner, an acknowledgment of the obligations of the Government of India to those distinguished officers, and its admiration of the ability, the energy, the judgment, and indefatigable devotion with which they have discharged the onerous and responsible duties entrusted to them, and of which I have been, for several years, a close and grateful observer. I request them to receive the most marked assurances of the cordial approbation and thanks of the Governor-General in Council; and, at the same time, I beg leave to commend them to the favour and consideration of the Honourable Court.

(Signed) DALHOUSIE.

May 9, 1853.

Finally, the Directors of the East India Company, whom Sir John Kaye, their chartered and chivalrous advocate, has not unjustly characterised as 'good masters, but very chary of gracious words,' proved, on the receipt of the Punjab report and of Lord Dalhousie's comments thereon, that they could, on occasion, not only not be chary of gracious words, but could be aroused into a genuine enthusiasm.

We will not delay (they say) to express to you the high satisfaction with which we have read this record of a wise and eminently successful administration. In the short period which has elapsed since the Punjab became a part of the British dominions, results have been achieved such as could scarcely have been hoped for as the reward of many years of well-directed exertions. The formidable army, which it had required so many battles to subdue, has been quietly disbanded, and the turbulent soldiery have settled to industrious pursuits. Peace and security reign throughout the country, and the amount of crime is as small as in our best administered territories. Justice has been made accessible, without costly formalities, to the whole population. Industry and commerce have been set free. A great mass of oppressive and burdensome taxation has been abolished. Money rents have been substituted for payment in kind, and a settlement of the land revenue has been completed in nearly the whole country, at a considerable reduction on the former amount. In the settlement, the best lights of recent experience have been turned to the utmost account, and the various errors, committed in a more imperfect state of our knowledge of India, have been carefully avoided. Cultivation has been largely increased. Notwithstanding the great sacrifices of revenue, there was a surplus, after defraying the civil and military expenses, of fifty-two lacs on the first, and sixty-four and a-half lacs on the second year after annexation. . . . Results like these reflect the greatest honour on the administration of your Lordship in Council, and on the system of Indian government generally. It is a source of just pride to us that our services, civil and military, should have afforded men capable, in so short a time, of carrying into full effect such a series of enlightened and beneficent measures. The executive functionaries in the subordinate ranks have proved themselves worthy of the honourable career which awaits them. The members of the Board of Administration—Sir Henry Lawrence, Mr. John Lawrence, Mr. Mansel, and Mr. Montgomery—have entitled themselves to be placed in the foremost rank of Indian administrators.

We are, your affectionate friends,

(Signed) R. ELLICE.
J. OLIPHANT, &c., &c.

London: October 26, 1853.

If any critic is disposed, malevolently or otherwise, to remark here that the eulogies of Lord Dalhousie were passed on what was, in part at least, his own handiwork, and so reflected credit on himself, and that the Directors based their judgment on the report drawn up by the actors themselves rather than on an immediate knowledge of the facts of the case, it is, perhaps, enough to point to the Mutiny, and to ask whether its experiences do not more than justify all that

has been said in praise of the Punjab administration. Had there been any weak point in the system that fiery trial must have discovered and probed it to the utmost. No such weak point was found.

But it is not without special interest, to me at least, to add that, after a conversation of many hours with the man who, perhaps of all others now living, is most familiar with the facts of the case, and was, throughout the best years of his life, most intimate with John Lawrence, I asked him point blank whether, looking back at this distance of time, he thought that any part of the 'Punjab Reports' was too highly coloured, and whether, if they had now to be written, he would wish to modify anything therein. Sir Richard Temple, as the next chapter will show, though he was not Secretary to the Board, had done an important bit of the Secretary's work, some time before its final dissolution. It was his pen which helped largely to put the thoughts of the Lawrences into words and to record their achievements, and it is hardly necessary to add that, since that time, there is scarcely a corner of India which he has not visited or which has not been under his personal rule. Like the much-travelled Ulysses of old, he has seen the cities of many men and has learned their thoughts. He has outlived most of the Lawrence generation, and has ruled or served another which knows all too little of them and theirs. But his answer to my question was unhesitating and emphatic. 'There is not a word,' he said, 'in the Punjab Reports which I would wish unwritten. On the contrary, I should feel justified in speaking now even more strongly of the achievements of the Board than I did then. I have borne, since that time, a part in the government of nearly every province in India, and now, looking back upon them all, I declare to you that I have seen no government to be compared with that of the Lawrences in the Punjab.'

CHAPTER XII.

HENRY AND JOHN LAWRENCE. 1849–1852.

In the last chapter I have given as clear and succinct a view as I could of the government of the Punjab by the Board of Administration, of what they aimed at, and of what they accomplished. Biographical the chapter is not, in the strict sense of the word, for I have been able to throw into it little that is distinctive of John Lawrence apart from his colleagues. The joint responsibility of the three members of the Board, the system by which all important measures were brought before them collectively, and the way in which, theoretically at all events, they worked together for a common end, would have made it difficult to do so. Biographical, therefore, I repeat, the chapter is not. But none the less is it essential to this biography; for, in the absence of private letters, we are compelled to judge of John Lawrence in great measure by what he did; and it is on what he did in the Punjab during these, as well as in subsequent years when he stood alone in responsibility and power, that, in my judgment, his chief title to fame rests. It was this which enabled him to ride and to allay the storm when it burst forth. Not even his iron grasp could have held the Punjab during the crisis, had not that grasp been riveted before by something which was not of iron. The glory of suppressing the Mutiny is great, but the glory of having made that suppression possible beforehand is greater still.

In the present chapter I purpose, so far as it is possible to do so, to bring out what is more personal and domestic in the life of John Lawrence during the same period of the Board (from March 1849 to January 1853), to lay stress on his individual work, and, in so doing, to quote freely from his demi-official letters, when they are of permanent interest. It is, in one respect, the most painful period of his life, for it deals with the severance—the inevitable and irrevocable severance—of two brothers, who were as able, as high-minded, as devoted to duty and to each other, as, perhaps, any two brothers ever

were. But it is a subject which I am not at liberty to shirk. Herman Merivale has treated it with ability and judgment from his standpoint as biographer of Sir Henry Lawrence. It remains for me to treat of it, as best I can, from my standpoint as the biographer of John Lawrence. Happily, there is no temptation to suppress aught that is necessary to the understanding of either of the two brothers. The characters of each will be brought out into strong relief. Neither of them will be found to be free from faults; and, what I imagine those faults to have been, I shall endeavour to indicate, as both brothers would have wished their biographers to do, without fear and without favour. But there is nothing which need shrink from the light of day, or which, however painful, is discreditable to either. The great light which is said to beat upon a throne and blacken every blot, will find nothing to blacken here.

The last glimpse we obtained of John Lawrence in the quiet of his own family, if such a word as quiet can ever be used of his toilsome life, was in March 1848, when, having rid himself, at last, of his troublesome 'acting' post at Lahore, he returned, with his wife and children, to his own Commissionership of Jullundur, hoping, in the cool hill-station of Dhurmsala, to enjoy a brief period of comparative rest and domestic life. There was excellent shooting to be had in the neighbourhood, and I am able to relate, nearly in his own words, one striking incident of the chase:—

'It was in the year 1848, that my brother Richard, my wife, my children, and myself, went up into the hills, to a place called Dhurmsala, near Kangra. There was first-rate bear-shooting to be had in the country round; so Richard, George Christian, and I myself, went off one day, accompanied by a suitable number of attendants who were to beat the bushes and rout out the animals. It was not long before we discovered an enormous bear concealed in a cavern. Many were our efforts to dislodge him, but all in vain, until one of the natives managed, by some means, to thrust a spear into him from behind.' At first, this seemed hardly to disturb him; but, as the man grew more persistent in his endeavours, Bruin, goaded into fury, rushed out to attack his enemies. I fired the moment I got sight of him, but only succeeded in wounding him. This made him more desperate. He rushed at me, and as I leaped back, my foot caught, and I rolled down the steep side of the hill amongst the thorns. In a moment he was upon me; I felt his hot breath upon my face, and thought it was all up with me. But my companions rushed to the rescue, and Bruin turned round, uncertain whom to attack. Before Richard could fire, he had singled out a tall handsome Sepoy, had sprung

upon him, and had torn his nose clean off his face. At this moment my brother fired, and, again, the bear was only wounded. Fortunately I had reloaded, and soon put an end to his existence by lodging a ball in his brain. I, at once, sent off a messenger to our house, carefully instructing him to tell my wife to prepare bandages and everything necessary, but to be sure to say that it was not I who was hurt. The moment he was off, I had the poor fellow put on a stretcher, and we all started for home. The unfortunate man was in dreadful pain, and his face was terribly lacerated; but the only thing that seemed to affect him was the fact that he was to have been married very shortly, and he was now afraid that his young woman would not have him, without a nose to his face. I tried to console him, but it was of no avail.

Meanwhile, the messenger had reached my house, and, after giving my wife the message, had told her that I was hurt. What the rascal meant I do not know, but he succeeded in thoroughly alarming her, and she instantly came out to meet the cavalcade, bringing our two little daughters, Kate and Emmie, with her. When she first saw the men carrying the stretcher in the distance, she thought I must be dead. But she was soon able to recognise me among the bearers, and could hardly believe her ears when I told her that I was safe and sound. We had the Sepoy carried into his tent, and our own doctor at once looked to his hurts, but gave it as his opinion that he was disfigured for life. Now it occurred to me that I had heard of a native doctor who was celebrated in those parts for being able to make noses. I had never paid much attention to this report before, but I now thought that the least I could do was to summon the nose-maker, and let him try his skill on the Sepoy who had lost his nose in my service. So I sent for the man, and took him in to see the invalid. He declared he would make him a new nose which would be as good as the one he had lost. I bid him set to work, and he at once proceeded to cut a triangular piece of skin out of the Sepoy's forehead; he put this over the place where the nose ought to be, and then pulled his face this way and that until, at last, he had quite a little lump resembling a nose on the man's face. He repeated the pulling process every day for a week, and finally produced a nose which, if not quite as good as the former one, was fairly presentable. The Sepoy's delight knew no bounds, especially as his young woman liked the new nose quite as much as the old one; indeed, I believe she looked on him as quite a hero.

John Lawrence's own escape had been a sufficiently narrow one. 'When I saw the bear and you rolling over one another,' said George Christian, who had been one of the party, 'I felt that my promotion was trembling in the balance.' 'You little villain!' exclaimed his chief; and, when telling his story, he used to say that when he

picked himself up from his roll amidst the thorns, he was like a porcupine or a pincushion, 'stuck' all over with them. 'It took my wife,' he said, 'a week or more to pull them out of my head.'

The news of the murder of Agnew and Anderson at Mooltan, and the dull rumbling of the impending storm in the Punjab, soon called John Lawrence away from the excitement of bear-hunting to even more stirring scenes. He left his wife and family behind him, warning them to be ready, on the receipt of a message from him, to come down with all speed to a place of safety in the plains. It was a pleasant spot, this Dhurmsala; and the hill people around it, the Gudis, were simple and lovable, as a trifling but touching incident of one of the earlier visits of the Lawrences to the place will show. John Lawrence had been called off to Lahore, to help his brother, and as his wife was the only European left in the small hill-station, he had spoken, before his departure, to the headman of a neighbouring village, begging him to look after her, and see that the family had no difficulty in getting what they required. The old man came often to see her, dressed in the peculiar costume of the hill people, a large loose coat fastened by a belt round the waist, and out of its capacious hollow he used to produce various offerings in the shape of cucumbers or Indian corn, and, now and then, a live fowl or lamb. He took great interest in her welfare and was always most kind and courteous. Thinking that she was unhappy in her quiet life, he wrote privately to her husband at Lahore to say that she looked so melancholy, always walking about with her head down, that he advised him to return to her as soon as possible. Otherwise she might be turned into a pheasant and be seen no more! Such was the odd superstition of this simple and kindly people.

But even the attentions of the trusty Gudi could hardly have made Dhurmsala a safe place of residence for Mrs. John Lawrence during the summer of 1848. For many of the hill chieftains around were preparing to rise, and a hasty message from her husband warned her to make the best of her way to the hill fort of Kangra, where his brother Richard would help her. With her four young children and her English maid, she left the little village. Kangra was only twelve miles distant, but the journey was not an easy one and took many a long hour to accomplish. They were obliged to travel in what are now well known as *jampans*, a sort of chair carried by bearers. There were several heavily swollen streams to be crossed, and here the jampans were carried on the heads of the bearers instead of on their

shoulders, while a second set of men walked alongside, helping them to hold their loads aloft. Before evening, the travellers arrived within the walls of the Kangra fort, and were, soon afterwards, summoned by other messages from John Lawrence to Hoshiarpore and Jullundur. Here he had taken a house for her, and here she passed the winter in the company of her sister-in-law, Mrs. Barton, whose husband was with his regiment throughout the Chillianwallah campaign. During the winter, John Lawrence, who was also with the troops in the numerous small expeditions which I have described, managed occasionally to visit her. But, early in the spring, he was summoned to Lahore to meet his brother Henry, who had just then returned from England.

At the end of March, the formal annexation of the Punjab took place, and John found himself, not altogether to his satisfaction, as his letters show, installed a member of the new governing Board. The hot weather was rapidly coming on and the Residency, as it has been described to me by those who have a good right to speak, was the busiest of all busy scenes. Some fifty officers and their families, arriving from various parts of India, and despatched with all haste through the roadless and still disturbed country to their various destinations; the Lawrences and their secretaries working, as we may well believe, full sixty minutes to every hour; every room and every bed in the Residency and the adjoining houses filled or over-filled, and crowds everywhere!

But (says Lady Lawrence), in spite of the overwhelming heat and turmoil, we were all too busy, I believe, to be ill. A wonderful work was accomplished during those days, and happy memories, indeed, have I of them. How I prized my evening drive with my husband; and how vigorous and strong he was! He was never too busy to attend to my wants, and help me in any troublesome matter; and, in addition to his own hard work, he always made time to look after his brother's private affairs. Indeed, as that brother remarked, he would have saved little for his children but for John's wonderful aid. Always liberal with his private funds, and ready to help others, my husband spent as little as possible on himself, and was ever sparing of the public money, anxiously impressing on everyone the necessity of strict economy in the management of the new province. But this is so well known that it needs no words of mine; only I like to show that, while he was careful for others, he never spared his own purse, or time, or trouble, when he could be helpful.

The Board met, and infinite were the number and variety of the

subjects calling for immediate attention. On Sir Henry Lawrence, as the President, naturally devolved what is called in India the 'political,' as distinguished from the 'civil,' work of the annexed province. He was the recognised medium of communication with the Supreme Government, and the racy and incisive letters of Lord Dalhousie, now before me, written to him day by day, and, sometimes, two or three on the same day, during the months which preceded and followed the annexation, give a pretty clear idea, in the absence of other documents, of the multifarious duties which fell, in the first instance, on him as President, and, afterwards, on the other members of the Board. The disbanding and then the partial re-enrolment of the Sikh army; the disarmament of the people; the treatment of the fallen Sirdars; the raising of Irregulars; the selection of military stations with gardens for the troops; the arrangements for the Guides and Engineers; the dismissal of Captain Cunningham by the Directors for the publication of his able and honest—too honest—history of the Sikhs; the trial of Moolraj; the care of the young Maharaja; the escape of the Maharani; the safe custody of the Crown jewels (of which more anon); the Afridi troubles, 'a plaguy set,' as Lord Dalhousie calls them; the preparation to receive the onslaught of Sir Charles Napier on the whole system of the administration of the Punjab,—these are but a fraction of the subjects with which Lord Dalhousie's letters deal, and which would come before John Lawrence as a member of the Board, though the initiative would rest not with him, but with his brother.

John Lawrence's own immediate duties were connected with the civil administration, and especially with the settlement of the land revenue. This was the work for which his admirable civil training had especially fitted him. He was now to reap the appropriate reward—a reward not of repose, but of redoubled work and responsibility—for those long years which he had spent almost alone among the dusky myriads of Paniput and Gurgaon, Etawa and Delhi. It was now that his knowledge of all classes of the natives, acquired, as it only could be acquired, by the closest intimacy with them, stored up in the most retentive of memories, and never allowed to rust for want of use—was to be called into abundant requisition. The 'mysteries' of the revenue survey and of the revision of the settlement were no mysteries to him, for he had long since been brought face to face with the difficulties which they suggested, and had been able, in great measure, to overcome them.

He knew (says Sir John Kaye, the friend of both brothers alike) how the boundaries of estates were determined, how their productiveness was to be increased, how revenue was to be raised in a manner most advantageous to the State and least injurious to the people. And with all this extensive knowledge were united energy and activity of the highest order. He had the enthusiasm of youth with the experience of age, and envy and detraction could say nothing worse of him than that he was the brother of Sir Henry Lawrence.

And, indeed, there was enough to be done in the Punjab to tax all this experience, all this energy, and all this enthusiasm to the utmost. Differences of opinion between the brothers on matters of policy soon began to reveal themselves, or rather were brought into greater prominence by the fact that they were now, for the first time, sitting on equal terms at the same council table. These differences had never been disguised. On the contrary, they had been fully recognised by each, as the letters of John Lawrence to his brother, which I have already quoted, show. But while John had been merely 'acting' for Henry at Lahore, he had, of course, set himself loyally to carry out his views, especially where they most differed from his own. Moreover, the questions between them respecting jagheers, the privileges and position of the native aristocracy, and the like, had been theoretical rather than practical, so long as the annexation of the Punjab was only looming in the distance and had not become a thing of the past. But now the decree had gone forth; the questions referred to had come within the range of practical politics; and the differences began to be more vital. Each brother had a quick temper, though Henry's was the least under control of the two; each had a clear head and a firm will; each had an equal voice at the Board; and each was fully convinced of the expediency and justice of the view which he himself held. But these were only the first mutterings of an explosion which might be postponed for many a month or year—possibly, might never break forth at all—and some of the earlier meetings of the volcanic Board seem to have been amusing enough.

Here is a sample. Shortly before the decree of annexation went forth, Lord Dalhousie had written to Henry Lawrence to make every disposition for the safe custody of the State jewels which were about to fall into the lap of the English. And, writing to him again on April 27, on the subject of the Maharani, who had just escaped from our hands, he remarks:—'This incident, three months ago, would have been inconvenient. Now, it does not so much signify. At the

same time, it is discreditable, and I have been annoyed by the occurrence. As guardians seem so little to be trusted, I hope you have taken proper precautions in providing full security for the jewels and Crown property at Lahore, whose removal would be a more serious affair than that of the Maharani.' It had, in fact, been found more than once, on the enrolment of some new province in our Empire, which, whether by cession, by lapse, or by forcible annexation, was growing, or about to grow, so rapidly, that the State jewels or money had had a knack of disappearing. It is amusing, in the correspondence before me, to read the expressions of virtuous indignation which bubble over from our officers at the extravagance, or rapacity, or carelessness of the former owners, when on entering a palace, which they deemed would be stocked with valuables ready for English use, they found that the treasury was empty and the jewels were gone. Great care was, therefore, needful, especially as among the Punjab jewels was the matchless Koh-i-noor, the 'mountain of light,' which it was intended should be expressly surrendered by the young Maharaja to the English Queen.

The origin of this peerless jewel is lost in the mists of legendary antiquity. It had fallen into the hands of the early Turkish invaders of India, and, from them, it had passed to the Moguls. 'My son Humayoun,' says the illustrious Baber, one of the most lovable of all Eastern monarchs, 'has won a jewel from the Raja which is valued at half the daily expenses of the whole world!' A century or two later, the Persian conqueror, Nadir Shah, seeing it glitter in the turban of Baber's conquered descendant, exclaimed with rough and somewhat costly humour, 'We will be friends; let us change our turbans in pledge of friendship.' And the exchange, of course, took place.

Χρύσεα χαλκείων, ἑκατόμβοι' ἐννεαβοίων.

The Afghan conqueror, Ahmed Shah, wrested it, in his turn, from the feeble hands of Nadir Shah's successors, and so it came into the possession of Shah Sooja, who was, by turns, the pensioner and the puppet of the English, and the miserable pretext of the first disastrous Afghan war. Half-prisoner and half-guest of Runjeet Sing, he had been relieved by the one-eyed, money-loving Sikh of the responsibility of keeping so valuable a treasure. Runjeet, listening, on his death-bed, to the suggestions of a wily Brahmin, had been half disposed, like other death-bed penitents, to make his peace with the other world by sending the beautiful jewel to adorn the idol of Jug-

gernaut. But fate reserved it for the custody of the Punjab Board, and for the ultimate possession of the English Crown. One incident of its transfer not generally known, I am able to relate on the best authority.

At one of the early meetings of the Board, the jewel had been formally made over to the Punjab Government, and by it committed to the care of John Lawrence. Perhaps, the other members of the Board thought him the most practical and business-like—as no doubt in most matters he was—of the three ; or they deemed that his splendid *physique*, and the gnarled and knotted stick which, fit emblem of himself, he always carried with him—and which the Sikhs, thinking it to be a kind of divining-rod or familiar spirit, christened by its owner's name, 'Jan Larens'—would be the best practical security for its safe keeping. But, in this instance, they misjudged their man. How could a man so careless of the conventionalities of life, a man who never wore a jewel on his person, till the orders and clasps which he won compelled him to do so, and, even then, used to put them so remorselessly in the wrong place that the Court *costumier* exclaimed in despair, that he would lose reputation by him, in spite of all his pains,—how, I ask, was it likely that such a man would realise the inestimable value of the jewel entrusted to him? And, again, what was the custody of a Court jewel compared with that of the happiness of the millions for which he was also responsible? Anyhow, half-unconsciously he thrust it, wrapped up in numerous folds of cloth, into his waistcoat pocket, the whole being contained in an insignificant little box, which could be thus easily put away. He went on working as hard as usual, and thought no more of his precious treasure. He changed his clothes for dinner, and threw his waistcoat aside, still forgetting all about the box contained in it !

About six weeks afterwards, a message came from Lord Dalhousie, saying that the Queen had ordered the jewel to be at once transmitted to her. The subject was mentioned by Sir Henry at the Board, when John said quietly, 'Send for it at once.' 'Why, *you've* got it !' said Sir Henry. In a moment, the fact of his carelessness flashed across him. He was horror-stricken, and, as he used to describe his feelings afterwards, when telling the story, he said to himself, 'Well, this is the worst trouble I have ever yet got into !' But such was his command over his countenance that he gave no external sign of trepidation : 'Oh yes, of course ; I forgot about it,' he said, and went on with the business of the meeting as if nothing had happened.

He soon, however, found an opportunity of slipping away to his private room, and, with his heart in his mouth, sent for his old bearer and said to him, 'Have you got a small box which was in my waistcoat pocket some time ago?' 'Yes, Sahib,' the man replied, '*Dibbia* (the native word for it), I found it and put it in one of your boxes.' 'Bring it here,' said the Sahib. Upon this, the old native went to a broken-down tin box, and produced the little one from it. 'Open it,' said John Lawrence, 'and see what is inside.' He watched the man, anxiously enough, as fold after fold of the small rags was taken off, and great was his relief when the precious gem appeared. The bearer seemed perfectly unconscious of the treasure which he had had in his keeping. 'There is nothing here, Sahib,' he said, 'but a bit of glass!'

The Koh-i-noor was then quickly presented to the Board that it might be forwarded to the Queen; and when John Lawrence told them his story, great was the amusement it caused. The jewel passed, I am told on good authority, through one or two other striking vicissitudes before it was safely lodged in the English crown. But never, I feel sure, whether flashing in the diadem of Turk or Mogul, or in the uplifted sword of Persian, or Afghan, or Sikh conqueror, did it pass through so strange a crisis, or run a greater risk of being lost for ever, than when it lay forgotten in the waistcoat pocket of John Lawrence, or in the broken-down tin box of his aged bearer.

I have spoken of the number and perplexity of the subjects which came before the Board for consideration in its early days. Henry Lawrence was not well at the time of annexation. He had returned hastily from England, without taking the rest which had been prescribed as essential for him, and in sore distress of mind at the mismanagement which, as he conceived, had led to the second Sikh war. The annexation of the Punjab overthrew the dream of a lifetime—the establishment of a strong, friendly, independent native power between ourselves and the wild Afghan tribes. He had struggled against the idea of annexation while it was yet in the future with all the chivalry and generosity of his nature; and now that it was an accomplished fact, he accepted it as such, set himself to make the best of it, and struggled, with the same chivalry and generosity, to ease the fall of the privileged classes. He contested every inch of ground with Lord Dalhousie and with his brother John, who saw, more clearly than he did, how impossible it was, in view of the poverty of the masses, for the two systems of government—the native

feudal system, based on huge grants of land, on immunities from taxation, and on military service; and our own, based on equality before the law, on equal and light assessments, and on reforms and improvements of every kind—to exist side by side. The more that could be left to the Sirdars of their dignity, their power, their property, their immunities, the better, in Henry Lawrence's judgment; the worse in John's and in Lord Dalhousie's. In the one case, the few would gain; in the other, the many. It was one of those questions on which honest and honourable and far-seeing men might well differ.

It may, perhaps, be said that it is as difficult not to feel with Henry Lawrence as not to think with John. In the one brother the emotional part of our nature tended to predominate; in the other the intellectual and the practical. Each had a warm heart and a clear head, and each, beyond question, had a conscience whose dictates were law. But the strong sympathies of Henry tended, at times, to overbalance his judgment; and the clearness of John's judgment tended to repress, or, at least, to keep under a too stern control, the feelings of his heart. The partisans of the one brother might be excused if they called the other flighty and unpractical; the partisans of that other, if they deemed the first rigorous and hard. But it would have been as impossible for the partisans of John not to love Henry, as for the partisans of Henry not to trust John.

Each brother, fully conscious that the other would, as far as possible, oppose and thwart his views on this and cognate questions, pressed them, probably, to a greater extent than he would otherwise have done. It was human nature that it should be so. The friction, the tension, the heartburning, were intense; for this question of the treatment of the Sirdars underlay and tended to colour and to become intermixed with all the others. But the result, as I have already said, was, beyond doubt, advantageous to the State. The privileged classes fell, as they needs must; but it was, to a certain extent, by a gradual and mitigated fall, thanks chiefly to the uphill battle fought by Henry Lawrence. The masses received an equivalent for the loss of their national life in the freedom from oppression, in the security of life and property, in costly improvements and yet in lightened assessments, thanks chiefly to the statesmanlike views and the untiring assiduity of John Lawrence.

Certainly, it would have fared ill with the great Sirdars who had favoured the rebellion had they been left to the tender mercies of

Lord Dalhousie. That they had anything left to them beyond 'their lives and the barest maintenance' was due to Henry Lawrence's earnest and importunate entreaties. 'Stripped of all rank, deprived of all property, reduced, each of them, to a monthly pittance of two hundred rupees, confined within very narrow limits, and then watched, well knowing that an attempt at flight would be made at the risk of their lives;'—such is the description of the Sirdars given on August 25, not by the highly coloured imagination of Henry Lawrence, but by Lord Dalhousie himself, in view of the misgivings of the Directors at home, who feared that they might still be the cause of another Punjab war.

The work and the worry entailed by the annexation had already begun to tell on Henry Lawrence's enfeebled health. The heat of the season was more than usually intense. It was, as Lord Dalhousie called it, 'a killing summer' for those who had to work through it. Everybody at Lahore suffered, Henry Lawrence most of all; and he was driven, much against his will, to apply for a month's leave of absence at Kussowlie. John Lawrence thus found himself, for the first time, on May 21, 1849, in the doubly delicate and difficult position which it was to be his to fill so often during his brother's Presidency of the Board. Left at Lahore, with one colleague only, who, with all his unquestioned ability, was disposed rather to criticise than to originate, to point out difficulties rather than to drive through them, he found that nearly the whole weight of the current business of the country was put upon his shoulders.

Henry Lawrence was, by nature, locomotive. Office work was distasteful to him. He had not passed through the long years of civil training which would have fitted him for it; and his natural disposition, his enfeebled health, the friction at the Board, already painfully felt, and the craving for that kind of life and work in which he was conscious that he could do most good, all combined to make it likely that, when it could legitimately be so, he would be found working elsewhere than at Lahore. A young civilian who had done good work in the Jullundur district, and who had a turn for epigram, remarked, during a visit to Lahore, with as much, perhaps, of truth and cleverness as an epigram usually contains, that the Punjab was governed by a firm of three partners, who might be characterised as the 'travelling,' the 'working,' and the 'sleeping' partner respectively. To spend four or five months in each year under canvas, riding some thirty or forty miles a day; to inspect a salt-mine, a fort, a gaol, an

asylum, or a bazaar; to dash off a review article in rough outline, leaving his ever-ready wife to fill up the hiatuses of grammar or of sense; to see with his own eyes every portion of his province, and to visit and converse freely with every class among his subjects, and with each and all of his subordinates, as far as possible, in their own homes, breathing into them all something of his own noble spirit,—this was exactly the life, with its variety, its freshness, its intensity, its human interest, which suited Henry Lawrence, and brought out the power in which, by all accounts, he seems to have been unique among his contemporaries, that of influencing men through their affections and their hearts. He was a man for whom, as I have been told repeatedly by those who had the best opportunity of knowing, and who are not given to exaggerate, peradventure, not one only, but a dozen, men in the Punjab would have even been prepared to die.

But though the peregrinations of Henry Lawrence were often necessary, and were always productive of benefit to that portion of his province which he visited, there were drawbacks attending them which could not but be felt, immediately by his colleagues and ultimately, also, by himself. It was not merely that the amount of work which was thrown upon those who were left behind was greater, but that there was an element of uncertainty in all that they did. Even if they knew their own minds fully, they could not be sure that they knew that of the President. Henry Lawrence often did not know his own mind. He was touchy and fitful: a disturbing element, therefore, on whose erratic movements it was impossible to count beforehand, and whose reappearance, at a critical moment, might, like that of Mr. Gladstone, in his place in Parliament, during his temporary retirement from public life, undo a great deal that had been done, or half-done, without him. Achilles absent was Achilles still. His frequent absences from Lahore tended, moreover, to bring his brother John into a prominence which he would never have sought for himself, and which, as far as possible, he shunned. It forced him to be, in many important matters, the medium of communication between the Board and Lord Dalhousie, and gave that clear-sighted Governor-General opportunities, which he might not otherwise have had, of comparing the aptitudes and capabilities of the two brothers, and of making up his mind, if circumstances should ever compel him to choose between them, as to the one on whom his choice should fall.

In September, Henry Lawrence set out on a prolonged tour through Huzara and Kashmere. Lord Dalhousie had not been unwilling that the President of the Board should see with his own eyes what was going on in Huzara, the domain of James Abbott, whose fatherly rule there—the rule, as he somewhat bitterly calls it, 'of prophet, priest, and king'—he seems to have regarded with suspicion and mislike. But he had expressed a doubt whether the remaining members would be able to carry on the work without him. The 'killing summer' had pretty well done its work. Ten men of the young Punjab establishment were already *hors de combat*. Mansel, the third member of the Board, and Christian, its Secretary, were ill, whilst Edwardes and Nicholson, who were each in themselves a tower of strength, were shortly going home on leave. But John Lawrence stepped into the gap and filled it as few others could have done, and, from this time forward, I find that he is in regular communication with Lord Dalhousie, giving his views freely on each question as it came up, but taking especial care to lay stress on his brother's views where they differed from his own. His heavy office work was perhaps relieved, rather than increased, by news which seemed to promise something of an adventure, and so to recall the long bygone days of Paniput.

Chuttur and Shere Sing had been allowed, as the upshot of the long controversy between Henry Lawrence and Lord Dalhousie, to reside in their own homes at Attari, but they were already, so it was believed by some of the authorities at Lahore, feeling their way towards another rising. They were feeding, day by day, a lot of Brahmins and Khuttris; messengers, it was reported, were passing to and fro between Attari, Sealkote, and Umritsur, where others of the fallen Sirdars were living; and it was even whispered that treasonable communications had come from Golab Sing in Kashmere, and from Dost Mohammed at Kabul. 'Brahmins and barbers,' says John Lawrence to Lord Dalhousie, 'the two classes of people who are usually engaged in all kind of intrigues, have been repeatedly seen at Attari.' 'Here was a piece of work which might have been safely left to the local officers, but the spirit of the man who had tracked out the murderer of William Fraser was awakened, and he determined to take a chief part in it himself. At one o'clock A.M. on the morning of October the 1st, he started on the enterprise, accompanied by Montgomery, Commissioner of Lahore, by Edwardes, by Hodson, and a small force. It was a clear moonlight night, and a rapid ride

brought them by dawn of day to the spot. They quietly surrounded the village; arrested Chuttur Sing in his own house; followed up and arrested his sons, who had just gone out to ride; and brought the whole party back in triumph to Lahore, before anyone in the city had guessed that such an expedition was even meditated. The other Sirdars at Umritsur and Sealkote were arrested almost simultaneously. Arms were discovered buried in various places, a suspicious correspondence with Dost Mohammed and with Golab Sing, 'a hart of many tynes,' as Lord Dalhousie calls him, was seized, and the unfortunate Sirdars were, not long afterwards, removed to a place of greater safety in Hindustan.

Bhai Maharaja Sing, the Guru who had headed the outbreak in the Jullundur Doab in the preceding year, and who, after being drowned, as it was reported, in the Chenab, had lately come to life and light again at Denanuggur, was finally disposed of about the same time. Like Aristomenes, among the Messenians of old, after one of his miraculous escapes, or like Schamyl, under similar circumstances, among the Circassians, he had been received with double reverence by his followers on his return from the dead. His followers carefully concealed his whereabouts, and, before an expedition could be concerted against him, he crossed back into Jullundur, where he was apprehended by Vansittart. And, with his disappearance from the scene, there passed away the last danger of any rising in the Punjab.

Another subject which occupied very much of John Lawrence's time during the first autumn of the existence of the Board was the preparation of an elaborate report, in which he took the bold step of advising the total abolition of all customs and transit duties in the Punjab. 'Our true policy,' he writes to Lord Dalhousie, 'is to give up every restriction that we can possibly do without, and retain the land-tax. By this means we conciliate the masses, and, especially, the industrial classes. Customs levies are harassing in all countries; in this country they are intolerable.' After a long correspondence, the wished-for reform was introduced, and trade in the Punjab was henceforth allowed to run in its natural channels, freed from all artificial obstructions.

But that which gave the overburdened Punjab administration more trouble and occupied more of its time than any other subject, during the first year of its existence, was the attitude taken up towards it by the impracticable genius whom the outburst of popular indigna-

tion after the battle of Chillianwallah had summoned from England to the command of the Indian army. 'If you don't go, I must,' the Duke of Wellington is reported to have said to Sir Charles Napier, when he hesitated to accept the post which was offered to him. His scruples were soon overcome; his ambition was fired; and he went out revolving magnificent schemes of conquest and reform, which were not bounded even by the horizon of India. He landed in Calcutta, on May 6, 1849, and set off with all speed for Simla. But he was already a disappointed man. He had expected to find war, and he found peace. Our half-victorious enemies of Chillianwallah had become our peaceful and half-contented subjects; and, to make the disappointment more complete, the conquered country had passed under the control of those 'politicals' upon whose assumed incapacity, alike in peace and in war, the conqueror and pacificator of Scinde had never ceased to pour out the vials of his contempt. 'I would rather,' he wrote to his brother on June 22, 'be Governor of the Punjab than Commander-in-Chief.' Fortunately, or unfortunately, he could not now be Governor of the Punjab; and, in his vexation, he used the opportunities which his post as Commander-in-Chief gave him, with the result, if not with the intention, of making it doubly difficult for anyone else to be so either.

His biography, written by his admiring brother William, and, still more, his own posthumous work on 'Indian Mis-government,' contain a strange medley of petulances, egotisms, and vagaries, which overlie and overshadow the flashes of insight, and even of genius, embedded within them. These two works, together with the voluminous memoranda and counter-memoranda of Sir Charles Napier himself, of Lord Dalhousie, and of the Punjab Board, together also with the letters in my possession which passed between the Lawrence brothers and the Governor-General, afford an embarrassing wealth of materials for this portion of my subject. There is little of permanent interest in the details of the controversy. But its echoes may, perhaps, still be heard in the differences which separate the Scinde school from that of the Punjab—the supporters, that is, of a military as opposed to a civil administration, and which, in later times, assuming another and a more serious shape, have divided Indian statesmen into two groups—those who, in view of the advance of Russia towards our Indian frontier, would push on to meet her, annexing or absorbing Afghanistan and the adjacent regions in the process, and those who, clinging with redoubled firmness to the natural frontier marked out

by the Indus and the Suliman wall, would only advance into the savage country which lies beyond, as the allies of the inhabitants against a threatened invasion. The most brilliant representative of the one school is, perhaps, Sir Bartle Frere; the most illustrious representative of the other is, beyond all question, Lord Lawrence. The controversy, therefore, has a bearing on the whole course of this biography.

That a struggle for supremacy would take place between two spirits so masterful and so autocratic as those of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief might have been foreseen from the beginning. But it was equally clear that the man who was armed with 'incontestably superior authority,' and was capable of stern self-control, would beat out of the field the brilliant and unmanageable old soldier, who had 'the faculty of believing without a reason and of hating without a provocation;' and was disposed to think nothing right unless he or his had the doing of it. Sir Charles Napier was now sixty-eight years of age—nearly double, that is, the age of his antagonist—but the feeling that he was in command of an army of 300,000 men made him, for the time, feel young again; and, in spite of a disease which was ultimately to prove fatal, he buckled down to his work at Simla, sitting at his desk, as he tells us himself, for some fifteen hours a day. At his very first interview with the Governor-General, if we can possibly believe the account given by Sir Charles in his posthumous work, the spirit of antagonism flashed forth between them. 'I have been warned,' said Lord Dalhousie, 'not to allow you to encroach on my authority, and I will take —— good care you do not.'

But a few quotations taken almost at random from Sir Charles's own letters and diaries, written at the time, will give a better idea than any lengthened description of the man with whom the Punjab Board—which was still in the throes of its birth, and which might have expected gentler treatment from its natural guardians—had now to deal.

Governing the Punjab (he says, writing from Calcutta shortly after his arrival on May 22) by a court of 'politicals' is curious, and it is scarcely to be believed that Dalhousie means this. . . . Instead of tying up the faggot of sticks, the political system seems to untie the bundle. The situation of the troops alarms me; they are everywhere deficient in cover and, of course, crowded. . . . We have 54,000 men in the Punjab. This is not necessary: with good government 20,000 would suffice, but not with a 'Board of Administration' as it is called! This Board has not

yet got a police; and it has 18,000 men as guards, of whom neither the Commander-in-Chief nor the Adjutant-General know a word, and they are from sixteen to one hundred miles distant from any military station.

Again :—

Strange as it seems, I have no patronage. Lord Hardinge raised eighteen new regiments, and did not give Lord Gough the disposal of a single commission. Lord Dalhousie has raised ten, and not a commission at my disposal! Indeed, they were all given away before I came. The Governors-General keep these things for themselves.

On August 2, he writes in his journal :—

Begun a letter to Lord Dalhousie, telling him that, if the army is not relieved from the pressure of the civil power, India is not safe. The habit is that all Civil servants have guards of honour, and treasury guards, and God knows what, till, when added to the military guards and duties, the soldiers are completely knocked up. This shall not go on if I can stop it, and Lord Dalhousie is well disposed to help me. He seems a good fellow, and sharp, but I doubt his abilities being equal to the ruling of this vast empire.

Such was Sir Charles Napier's opinion of Lord Dalhousie. Here is his opinion of the Lawrences, and of their relation to the Governor-General :—

The Lawrences have been forced upon Lord Dalhousie; the Punjab system is not his—at least he tells me so. . . Henry Lawrence is a good fellow, but I doubt his capacity. His brother John is said to be a clever man, and I am inclined to think he is; but a man may have good sense and yet not be fit to rule a large country.

Here is his description of his own position, as it appeared to himself :—

I am Commander-in-Chief of the Indian army, but I cannot order a man to move. I must write a letter to one secretary, who writes to another, who addresses a third, who asks the Governor-General's leave to move the company back from Batalu. The house that Jack built is a joke to it. The commander of 300,000 men can't move three companies out of danger without leave from the Civil power! I will not stay in India.

And here, once more, is his description of himself as he ought to be—if ever, that is, his ideal commonwealth, the counterpart of the philosopher-kings, or king-philosophers, of Plato could be realised, when a Sir Charles Napier should be king of England, or the king of

England should be a Sir Charles Napier. It is a curious mixture of the grand and the grotesque, the sublime and the pathetic :—

Would that I were king of India! I would make Muscowa and Pekin shake. . . . The five rivers and the Punjab, the Indus and Scinde, the Red Sea and Malta! what a chain of lands and waters to attach England to India! Were I king of England, I would, from the palace of Delhi, thrust forth a clenched fist in the teeth of Russia and France. England's fleet should be all in all in the West, and the Indian army all in all in the East. India should not belong another day to the 'ignominious tyrants,' nor should it depend upon opium sales, but on an immense population well employed in peaceful pursuits. She should suck English manufactures up her great rivers, and pour down those rivers her own varied products. Kurrachi, you will yet be the glory of the East! Would that I could come alive again to see you, Kurrachi, in your grandeur!

As for the high Indian authorities who were opposed, or—what was the same thing—whom he assumed would be opposed, to him, his views of them are equally explicit.

By an old Indian I mean a man full of curry and of bad Hindustani, with a fat liver and no brains, but with a self-sufficient idea that no one can know India except through long experience of brandy, champagne, gram-fed mutton, cheroots, and hookahs.[1]

It was with such feelings towards those who were above, and below, and around him, that the doughty old Commander-in-Chief addressed himself to the military tour of inspection on which he started from Simla, on October 13. It was a tour intended to result in great reforms, and was full of growls and grievances of every description. His keen eye of course detected many real blots in the military system. But the indiscriminate censure he poured on all existing arrangements minimised the effect of his criticisms where they were really deserved. The barracks no doubt needed much improvement everywhere. But his remarks on 'that infernal military Board,' and his comparison of their barracks to the 'Black Hole of Calcutta' and to 'slaughter-houses,' were certain only to rouse the ire of the authorities, and to cause their barracks to remain something like Black Holes and slaughter-houses still. Anyhow, in his criticism of the army arrangements, he was speaking of that which lay within his province, and

[1] See *Life of Sir Charles Napier*, vol. iv. pp. 166, 170, 173, 181, 183, 208, &c.

with which he might be supposed to be acquainted. But in his attack on the whole of the Punjab Administration, which he bound up with it, he was speaking of that of which he knew, and was determined to know, nothing at all. It should be remembered that, when he began to write his attack, he had paid only a flying visit of two days to the Punjab; had given Henry Lawrence only one private interview; had grudged him even that; and had treated the information he had given him with undisguised contempt. Sincerely believing that he himself was the one able and honest man in India, and that every civil administrator, with the exception of Thomason and W. Edwards, who, somehow, seem to have got on his soft side, was either a fool or a knave, and probably both, it was not likely that he would spare the 'ignorant civilians and brainless politicals,' 'the gentlemen who wore red coats but who were not soldiers,' who had deprived him of the chance of governing the Punjab, as he had governed Scinde, and whose handiwork he now had it in his power to appraise. And so, drawing on his prejudices for his facts, and on his wishes for his prophecies of the future, he had no difficulty in setting before Lord Dalhousie a sufficiently gloomy picture of the Punjab as it was, and as it was destined to be.

He arrived at Lahore on November 30. His Report was not then finished, so that he had a chance of getting information on the spot from those who were most competent and anxious to give it. But he avoided the society of the Lawrences, declined to discuss any public matters with them, and returned no answer to their pressing inquiries as to that on which so many of their own measures, in particular, the line taken by the Grand Trunk Road, must depend —his military arrangements for the province. They could not find out from him where a single cantonment was to be, nor even, whether they were or were not to be responsible for the defence of the frontier and the organisation of its defenders. He would allow the site of no cantonment to be fixed till he had seen it with his own eyes; and this, though he had had at his disposal, for months past, the eyes and the experience of soldiers like Sir Walter Gilbert and Sir Colin Campbell, both of whom held high commands, at the time, in the Punjab.

Such being the circumstances under which his Report was prepared and completed, we are not surprised to find that its assertions are always exaggerated and are often reckless and untrue. The Sikhs—a fact unknown to the Punjab Government and to everybody else, but, somehow, revealed to Sir Charles Napier for the purposes of

his Report—were, he said, daily casting guns in holes in the jungles and meditating revolt! Golab Sing's power was enormous—though Henry Lawrence had written to him from Kashmere giving the details gathered on the spot, demonstrating the exact reverse—and he too was preparing for war! The inhabitants of the alpine district to the north of the Jullundur Doab were, as he described them, dissatisfied Sikh soldiers, not, as they really were, submissive and contented Rajpoots! The discontent shown by a few regiments, first at Rawul Pindi and afterwards at Wuzeerabad, in connection with the lowering of their pay, was a perfectly natural incident of such a change. But it was magnified by Sir Charles, as he looked back upon it in after years, into a portentous and premeditated mutiny of some thirty battalions which, had *he* not been there to deal with it, might have threatened our power in India; and this, though Lord Dalhousie, who was responsible for the maintenance of that power, Sir Walter Gilbert, who was in high command in the Punjab, Henry and John Lawrence, who were going in and out amongst the troops, and the Duke of Wellington, to whom the evidence of the 'mutiny' was afterwards submitted by Sir Charles himself—all judged it to be the creature of his own imagination. The force of 54,000 men which garrisoned the conquered province, and which, if he were Governor, might, he said, be cut down at once to 20,000, and soon to something much less, it was necessary to maintain only because the Punjab Government was bad, and because another insurrection was impending!. The irregular troops, police, &c., who were independent of him, and who did the main part of the active work of the country, were nothing but 'paid idlers,' who gave no protection at all to the civil servants of the Crown! 'In military matters,' so he sums up his opinion, 'the Punjab Administration is only worthy of censure, and its system appears to me clearly tending to produce early dislike to our rule and possible insurrection. . . . The Government is feeble and expensive, when it ought to be strong and economical.' 'A large revenue and a quiet people,' he adds, with an honesty which was habitual, and with a modesty which was rare in him, 'will make me out a false prophet.' But, meanwhile, the upshot of the whole Report was that the Scinde military system ought to be the model for the Punjab and for the rest of India. All civil government was self-condemned.[1]

[1] See *Indian Misgovernment*, by Sir Charles Napier, *passim*; and compare Sir Henry Lawrence's answer to it in the *Calcutta Review*, vol. xxii.

A document of this character could not fail to arouse the susceptibilities of Lord Dalhousie. It touched him in his tenderest point; for the Punjab Government was his own creation. But the annoyance it occasioned was not unmixed with pleasure, for it gave to him, as well as to the members of the Board who were more directly attacked, an opportunity, which they were not likely to neglect, of making a crushing rejoinder. The minute of the Governor-General has been published by Sir Charles Napier himself, but I am not aware that the reply of the Board has ever received equal publicity. It has been preserved among Lord Lawrence's private papers, and I gather, from internal evidence as well as from hints dropped here and there in his letters, that it is his own handiwork throughout. It is a masterly State document, studiously moderate in tone, as indeed the consciousness of a vast reserve of strength in its writer well enabled it to be, and full of interest. Want of space alone prevents my reproducing it in full. To quote the whole of its seventy-six paragraphs would extend this biography beyond reasonable limits, and the other alternative of quoting only the more salient passages of a paper, each paragraph of which depends for its strength on its close connection with what has gone before and with what follows, seems to me to be doubly objectionable. Such a document, if it is to be judged at all, must be judged as a whole; and it may perhaps be hoped that this and other of Lord Lawrence's weightier State papers, whose length precludes them from more than a passing notice in this biography, may some day see the light in a separate volume. Events move quickly even in the East, and change of circumstances may already have caused many of Lord Lawrence's views to seem out of date, but the essential principles underlying all that he wrote and thought and did will be as true a hundred years hence as they are to-day; and from these principles, as from a mine of wealth, many generations of Indian statesmen may gather treasures new and old, learning alike what is the practical ideal at which Indian rulers ought to aim, and what are the dangers which it most behoves them to avoid.

It was well for the peace of the official world in India that neither of the documents of which I have been speaking saw the light till after December 1849; for, in that month, the august antagonists were all thrown together at Lahore. It was one of the earliest visits which the Governor-General had paid to the capital of the province he had annexed. Henry Lawrence hurried back from Kashmere to be in time to receive him there, and Sir Charles Napier arrived, as I

have already stated, in the course of his military tour of inspection. The presence of a common foe drew Lord Dalhousie and Henry Lawrence more closely together than might otherwise have been the case, and Sir Charles Napier appears to have occupied most of his time in ridiculing the fortifications of Lahore proposed by the Board, and in proposing counter-fortifications of his own. It was an amusement which Henry Lawrence afterwards retorted on him, and, as it seems, with reason on his side, in the pages of the 'Calcutta Review' (January 1854). The pressing questions of the frontier force and of the cantonments, even those of the capital itself, still remained unsettled. The oracle was dumb, and, till it could be induced to speak, all other arrangements were necessarily suspended.

How the matter ended I am able to relate on the authority of an eye-witness and a principal actor in it. The story has never, I believe, been told till now, and it is highly characteristic of Sir Charles Napier.

One day, towards the end of his stay in Lahore, the three members of the Board and Montgomery, who was then Commissioner of the Lahore division, happened to be taking their early morning ride together, when, in the distance, they saw the Commander-in-Chief and his Staff similarly employed. 'Let us go straight up to him,' said Henry to John Lawrence, 'and see if we cannot manage to get an answer out of him at last about the cantonments for Lahore.' They did so. 'You want to know where the cantonments are to be, do you?' said Sir Charles; 'follow me then;' and, as he spoke, he dug his spurs into his horse and rode off as hard as he could go, neck or nothing, across country, some three or four miles. His Staff followed him as best they could, and Henry Lawrence, John Lawrence, Mansel, and Montgomery, who were probably not so well mounted, followed, as they too best could, behind. It was a regular John Gilpin ride, composed not of post-boys, and of 'six gentlemen upon the road,' crying 'Stop thief!' but of the most august personages, civil and military, in the Punjab. At last, the old General reined in his horse in the middle of the plain, to all appearance at simple haphazard, and when the last of the long pursuit came up, he cried out from the midst of smoking steeds and breathless riders, 'You asked me where the cantonments are to be; they are to be here.' As ill luck would have it, he had pitched on a bit of ground which was particularly marshy and pestilential. But the word was spoken, and it was only by a stretch of authority that the Engineers employed to

construct the cantonments managed to draw them back a little from a rather more to a rather less unhealthy spot. Such was the origin of the famous cantonments of Mean Meer!

This matter settled, Sir Charles was able to pursue his military tour. Accompanied by John Lawrence, he paid a visit to Jummoo and had an interview with Golab Sing. 'The Commander-in-Chief was kind and courteous,' says his companion, while the redoubtable Maharaja was, 'if possible, more civil and amiable than ever.' Sir Charles moved onwards, as he delighted to reflect, over the ground which had been traversed by Alexander the Great, to Wuzeerabad, Jhelum, Rawul Pindi, and Peshawur. At Wuzeerabad, he obtained fresh evidence, as he thought, of the mutinous disposition of the Sepoys, and, at Peshawur, he struck up a considerable friendship with George Lawrence, the officer in charge. 'A right good fellow,' Sir Charles calls him, Lawrence though he was, and guilty though he had also been of the unpardonable offence of 'trying the advising scheme' with him. Some small military operations were just then in progress against the Afridis of the famous Kohat pass. These wild mountaineers had ceded to us the right of making a road through their country on payment of a stipulated sum; they had taken the money, and then, after their fashion, had fallen by night on the detachment of sappers and miners who were employed in the work, had cut the ropes of the tent in which the wearied men lay sleeping, and, before they could disengage themselves, had stabbed them all to death. Sir Charles joined in the operations, which, inconsiderable enough in themselves, are only memorable for the war of words which sprung up respecting them as soon as the sword was sheathed; the Commander-in-Chief asserting that, but for him, the two regiments employed would have been annihilated by the folly of the Board, and the Board retorting that there had been no serious fighting at all, and that Sir Charles had been escorted back in safety to Peshawur by Coke and Pollock, rather than they by Sir Charles. In any case, it was the last time that the grand old soldier was under fire, and during his military tour, tempestuous as it was, he managed to confer at least two benefits on the country. He cut down, for the time, the extravagant retinue which had usually accompanied the Commander-in-Chief when he was on the march, and which had often preyed, like a swarm of locusts, on the districts through which it had advanced. And, secondly, he succeeded in inducing Lord Dalhousie to lessen the danger of combination among the Sepoys, by enlisting some

Ghoorkas along with them. 'Like Brennus,' as he said himself, 'he threw the sword of those redoubtable little warriors into the scale;' and the experiment, in spite of the misgivings of Lord Dalhousie and Henry Lawrence, has been abundantly justified by its success. In whatever part of our Empire the Ghoorkas have been called upon to draw the sword in our defence, they have done us excellent service.

During the absence of Lord Dalhousie at sea, Sir Charles Napier, acting as if he were Governor-General, took upon himself to suspend a Government order relating to the pay of the troops. It was an outrageous usurpation of authority, which was followed by a severe rebuke from the Governor-General on his return, by the immediate resignation of Sir Charles, and by the acceptance of that resignation by the Duke of Wellington, who had urged him to go out to India, but who now, without hesitation, pronounced him to be in the wrong. So passed from India the grand old veteran. His sun set, as indeed it had shone for many a long day, in the midst of a stormy sea, and the final outpouring of his wrath in his posthumous publication, kept up the after-swell for years after his turbulent spirit had been laid to rest in the grave.

A few extracts from John Lawrence's letters written during this period will throw light on his personal relations to the two chief antagonists, on the views he took of the most pressing questions of the day, on his relations to his subordinates, and on the multifarious duties which fell, in sickness and in health alike, on his own willing shoulders. Here is his view of the frontier-force question, a view different from that of his brother and from that which ultimately prevailed:—

To Lord Dalhousie.

December 18, 1849.

The Commander-in-Chief is still here, and no one knows when he will start. He has not answered my brother's note about the frontier, and the Irregulars. I have thought a good deal about the matter since I saw your Lordship, and I confess that, on the whole, I would prefer that the Commander-in-Chief kept the frontier himself. I think my brother's arrangement a good one, and perfectly feasible, if carried out as a whole; but I fear that if we have to do the work, we shall have but a portion of what he asks for. I do not covet military honour; indeed, I rather shrink from it. Every civil and political officer who has to meddle in such matters does it with a rope round his neck. The honour and profit belong to the military; the disgrace and damage to the political. Irregulars are, I believe, better adapted for all partisan warfare than

Regulars; but I believe in my heart that if the Irregulars kept the border under us, we should not be backed up by many officers with the Regulars as we ought to be, and as will be essentially necessary. I should like to see the military do their work, and the civil officers theirs. The frontier is the post of danger, and therefore the post of honour, and it seems to be an anomaly giving it to us. We have now 54,000 Regular and Irregular troops in the Punjab, and shall have little short of 20,000 of the new levies. This seems to me an excessive number for such a country.

And again, January 3, 1850:—

The way the Commander-in Chief is distributing the troops, or rather leaving them, seems as if he would wish to have a row, that he might step in and have the glory of quelling it. He says the civil government necessitates the presence of so many troops, and yet he masses them with reference to the Afghans and Golab Sing! Your Lordship is astounded at our request for more civil corps. With a different distribution of the regular army such would not be required, and that, too, without employing them on civil duty. Six thousand infantry and 2,500 cavalry would then be abundance, I should say. Your Lordship is aware of my views as regards the protection of the frontier. One of the great objections to the civil officers guarding it, seems to me to arise from the circumstance that it takes them too much from their legitimate duties. They have not time to be both soldiers and civilians, even if they had the genius and the knowledge, and the consequence will be that the latter duties will be neglected.

The following passage is interesting, chiefly, as showing that the jagheerdars of the Punjab did not get quite such hard measure from Lord Dalhousie as is usually supposed:—

The arrangements regarding jagheers, as lately received from your Lordship, have given much satisfaction, and have exceeded all expectation. A Sikh Sirdar remarked to me that they had got more than Runjeet Sing ever would have given them, and that too free of all service. He remarked that when Hurri Sing, the bravest Sikh Sirdar, was killed fighting against the Afghans, Runjeet Sing actually confined his wives till they gave up his wealth! The customs abolition will also, I am satisfied, be hailed with great satisfaction, especially, by the mass of the people, whose material interests will be immediately improved by the change. We now only want our canals to change the face of the country. If your Lordship had a doubt on the point, your trip to Mooltan will, I think, have removed it. Robert Napier is here at work. Poor fellow! he has just lost his wife.

To Lieutenant James, who had served four years in Scinde, the

greater part of them in civil employ, and was hereafter to be one of John Lawrence's ablest subordinates in the Punjab, he writes two long letters asking for full particulars of the Scinde administration. For he thought it advisable, while defending himself from the attacks of Sir Charles Napier, to carry the war into the enemy's country. I quote some extracts, partly, as showing his insatiable appetite for minute detail, and the care he took to find out what a man was worth before he invited him into the Punjab; partly, as indicating the spirit in which he approached the Scinde question, anxious to give full credit to what was good and to make allowance for what was bad in his opponent's rule :—

I want you to let me know what kind of officer Captain Fleming, in Scinde, is? Is he an able civil officer? Does he understand revenue matters properly? Is he a man for *Batai*, and farms or assessments with the village community? Kindly answer these queries, and also say if he is strong in mind and body—that is, can he, and will he, work hard?

I wish you would give me some idea of the Scinde system past and present—that is, under Sir Charles Napier and under Pringle; particularly under the former. He is a first-rate soldier and a man of great capacity generally. But I cannot understand how he could have managed the civil details. He knew nothing of the language, the customs, or the habits of the people; of revenue customs or police arrangements, though the latter depends more on good sense. Brown, his secretary, I knew well; he was a fine fellow, but was certainly not cut out for a secretary. Then his district officers must, in the first instance, have had no civil training. I confess, when I think of all this I feel surprised, not at the alleged defects in the system, but that anything worthy of being called a system was carried out.

I think I have heard that all the land-tax was collected in grain, not at a fixed quota for each village, but by *Batai* (division of the crop); but that lately they have begun to introduce a three years' settlement. Is this the case? If so, up to what year did the grain system continue? what did you do with it all? Did it not work ill? Were not Government and the people both plundered, particularly the former? Customs—what customs did you collect? Import or export only, or transit also? Had you any town duties?

Police system—briefly describe it. Judicial—you had assistant district officers; and the Governor—who was the executive, the district officer or the assistant?—that is, did the latter carry out all details and the district officer act as a kind of judge, and hear appeals? as is the case in Madras, I believe; or was it, like our Bengal system, the district officer being the

responsibile executive, while the assistants were his aids? In this case, who heard appeals? If the Governor did, he must have had an English translation of every one sent up. How could you afford time for this? Did the Governor ever hold courts himself? If so, what trials did he hear? Cases that go to our commissioners, how disposed of?

Finance—what do you consider was the *bonâ-fide* revenue of Scinde? What its civil expenses, including police corps? I do not expect exact amounts; an approximation will suffice. If the revenue was forty lacs, for instance, was the civil expenditure one-half, a third, or a quarter? Kindly give me a reply to this letter the first leisure half-hour.

A very long 'half-hour's work' was thus cut out for James, but his answer came within ten days—that is, pretty nearly by return of post, and called forth another torrent of queries and suggestions from John Lawrence. I extract from them the following only :—

I have heard something of the three collectors and their discussions. What a system for such a man as Sir Charles to advocate! Judicial—you flogged and fined up to 500 rupees without record or power of appeal. I fear some of your men must have done much harm. There was a Mr. —— under me in the Jullundur who had been in Scinde, and I saw some terrible cases of oppression by him in this way, to which I speedily put a stop. . . . I think a good article on Scinde, written in a fair and liberal spirit, entering into details fully, pointing out its merits and demerits truthfully, would be read with great interest and be very acceptable, particularly just now.

John Lawrence's formal answer to Sir Charles Napier's attack appears to have been finished towards the end of March, and, writing to Lord Dalhousie on the 31st, he speaks thus of it :—

I hope your Lordship will approve of our answer to Sir Charles Napier's paper. We might have said a good deal more, but were anxious to be as amiable as possible. A defensive fight is usually a losing one, in politics as in war; the assailant has many advantages. He has the immense one of a great name. I believe he did in Scinde wonderfully well; perhaps as well, if not better, than anyone under similar difficulties could have done. But to suppose that a man ignorant of the manners, customs, habits, and language of a people, with untrained men under him, could really have governed a country as he thinks he did Scinde, seems to me an impossibility. He has always had one great advantage, namely, that he tells his own story. A man may make a good many mistakes, and still be a better ruler than an Ameer of Scinde.

His remarks upon the Afridi troubles bring forcibly before us

some of the difficulties in dealing with such barbarous tribes—difficulties which his own wise administration and that of his successors have progressively tended to diminish, though they cannot be said to be finally settled even now. They show also that he was not backward to advocate offensive measures against the border tribes where they were necessary.

The present state of Kohat is far from satisfactory. I much fear that nothing we can do will bring the Afridis to their senses; but another expedition may do so, if made with deliberation and with a sufficient force. The Commander-in-Chief, who declared on his first arrival at Peshawur that, were he not tied hand and foot, he would, within a week, be on his way to Kabul, is now for peace, for treaties and payments. If peace and security were, even probably, to be obtained in this way, it would be well worth the trial. But your Lordship may depend on it that neither Scindis nor Afghans are thus to be managed. You must thrash them soundly, first, before they will respect you. A little money judiciously expended among the heads of clans would then prove useful. But there are many drawbacks to the paying system. The very fact that an influential man receives our pay tends to lessen his influence. It is very difficult to know whom to pay, for power and influence are continually changing hands. The more we expend, the more we are expected to give. Lord Auckland spent lacs of rupees in this way at Herat, Kabul, and in the Khyber, and all to little or no purpose. It is certainly a difficult thing for a 'political' to advocate offensive measures when the Commander-in-Chief is for peace; but I much fear that they are necessary. We cannot exasperate the Afridis more than we have done, whereas, by punishing them well, we may make them fear us, which now they do not do. I take the liberty of enclosing a letter I received from Sir Colin Campbell. It gives his views of the Afridis, and the comparative value of the new irregular corps and our own native infantry. I am myself quite satisfied of the superiority of the former, especially for all hill work. Our Oudh men are not equal, man to man, to the people of this country, and both parties know it.

About this time, John Lawrence was summoned by Lord Dalhousie to Simla, and his reply, May 1, 1850, shows something of the difficulties with which he was, even then, struggling at Lahore:—

I shall be very happy to come up to Simla and wait on your Lordship, and I am quite sure that if I could stay there for a little time it would do me good. But the work here is so heavy, and I have so little hope of its being carried on according to my own views, that I think it will be my duty to stay as short a time as possible. Since the division of labour we have all, I think, worked more satisfactorily; but there are many

questions on which each man wishes to carry out his own views, and in such cases, mine, in my absence, would, necessarily, not be thought of. I shall arrange to work my own department while away, and where this is not to be done, leave returns against the time when I come back. I propose leaving this on Wednesday morning, and I hope to get up to Simla by Saturday. I trust that this delay will not be objected to by your Lordship. . . . I was glad to see in the 'Overland' yesterday that Sir Robert Peel had spoken so handsomely of the Civil Service at the great dinner to Lord Gough. It is a satisfaction to see that, in England, some merit may be attached to anything besides a red coat.

The visit to Simla was paid. It only lasted a fortnight, and a great amount of work was done during it. But the change did John Lawrence good, and helped him through a long and trying summer. Speaking of an officer who was anxious to get a political charge on the frontier, and also to be made a magistrate, as he had been in Scinde, he says to Lord Dalhousie on July 3 :—

He is a fine soldier, but not at all cut out, I should say, for civil work, nor would such a place as he wishes ever answer. No man can serve two masters. Moreover, in such arrangements there is this inherent evil, that it gives a soldier great facilities for getting up a disturbance, if so inclined. Anything like an *imperium in imperio* is also bad, and sure to bring on a collision between the district officer and such roving magistrates. Our officers when they have nothing else to say against a civil officer are sometimes inclined to sneer at his youth. Youth, in itself, is no fault in an executive officer. If a man knows his work, and has been properly trained, it is an advantage in a country like India, where indolence and apathy are the prevailing defects. We daily see instances where age and experience do not go together. When both are inexperienced, I would infinitely prefer a young to an old man ; for the former is more apt to learn, while the latter is wedded to preconceived notions.

A passage in a letter of July 22 gives some slight idea of the inordinate pressure under which every officer, high and low, in the Punjab, was expected, during these eventful years, to work and live. The Lawrences had gone, as boys, to a school at which there were no holidays, and the Punjab officers were, it seems, so far as their masters could prevent it, to have none either ; at least, not till they were fairly abreast of their work, a consummation which, however devoutly to be wished, seemed each month to become more and more remote, as new fields of enterprise opened out before them. It was expedient that a few white men should suffer, and, if need be,

die for the dusky millions of the Punjab. On this principle John Lawrence acted himself, and, on this, he expected everyone else who came within his sphere, if he would keep well with him, to act also. Lord Dalhousie, without making any definite request on the subject, had mentioned to John Lawrence the wish of Lord W. Hay, a near relative of his and an officer employed under the Board, to get some leave.

If Lord W. Hay (replied John Lawrence) is left to our mercies, we must, in duty bound, refuse him leave. We have agreed not to recommend any leave unless when men are sick. There is still much to do, and will be so for the next two years. Every day is of value, and the best officer cannot work too hard or too long for the public interest. We have a number of men away on sick certificate, and almost every week brings in similar applications, and will, I fear, continue to do so until October. If the rains prove a failure, which I much fear they will, our hands will be full to overflowing. It will take all the metal of our Punjab executive to keep the work down.

What wonder that, under such circumstances, *the Punjab head* came to be a proverbial expression for the break-down which was the result of over-work, and which sent so many of the Punjab officers, sorely against the will of their chiefs, to recruit exhausted nature for a month or two in the delicious sanataria of Murri or Chumba or Simla?

The very slight changes of air or scene which John Lawrence allowed himself to take were only justified to his mind by the amount of work which he managed to combine with them, and he was always ready to stay at his desk if he thought his brother could go instead and do the locomotive work, which suited him better. For example, it had been long since arranged that John Lawrence should accompany Lord Dalhousie in a tour in the north-west of the Punjab. He looked forward to the treat with real pleasure. But a passage in a letter of September 15 shows how far he was from wishing in any way to oust or take precedence of his brother :—

Nothing I should like better than to run along the frontier; but my brother wishes to go there also, particularly if we act against the Afridis; and as his services will be in every way more useful and carry more weight than mine in public opinion, I will willingly withdraw my request to accompany your Lordship to the frontier. I am very sorry to say that more of our officers are getting ill. Major Lake and Hercules Scott are both ailing, and may both have to go home. In them, George

Campbell, and Cust, we lose some of our best civil officers, with none to replace them of equal merit. I feel sometimes quite desperate when looking forward.

It was in this year also that the Punjab lost the services of George, the eldest of the three distinguished Lawrence brothers. Previous to the annexation of the country, he had, at the head of 8,000 Sikh troops, subject to the Durbar, held, with the greatest credit to himself and advantage to the district, the important frontier post of Peshawur, and there, by his fearlessness, his chivalry, his generosity, his moral courage, had acquired that influence over the Sikhs which, when he fell into their hands during the second Sikh war, led them to treat him throughout as their honoured guest and friend rather than as their prisoner. His services had been appreciated alike by the highest civil and military authorities—by Lord Hardinge and by Lord Dalhousie, as well as by Sir Charles Napier. 'He is a right good soldier,' said the last named hard-to-please judge of military merit, 'and a right good fellow, and my opinion of him is high.' In April of this year he had been attacked by fever, and, on his partial recovery, he was offered the post of Political Agent at Meywar in Rajpootana. 'I regard,' said Lord Dalhousie, 'your claims to the post as superior to any of those which have been preferred, and I feel sure that the office is one which will be satisfactory to yourself, and that you will fill it to the satisfaction of the Government. I shall be heartily sorry to lose you from the Punjab, where you have played your part so much to my satisfaction, as well in peace as in war.' Before long, George Lawrence was to be followed by his brother Henry; and when, on March 3, 1857, Henry was called away to become Chief Commissioner of Oude, George succeeded to his post of Chief Agent for the Governor-General in Rajpootana; and, during the following eventful months, when the power of England in India was being shaken to its base in many of the British provinces, it should be mentioned that not one of the nineteen independent states of Rajpootana wavered in its good feeling towards the paramount power.

On the much-disputed question of the frontier force, which was, at length, nearing its solution, and not in the way in which John Lawrence then advocated, I am induced to quote one other letter, because, though it travels over some old ground, it contains remarks on the public opinion of India, which are as true now as on the day on which they were written, and because of the vivid portraiture

it gives, in very few words, of himself and his colleagues on the Board :—

The main question is as to the ten Punjab corps being made over to the Commander-in-Chief, or left with the Board for the defence of the country on the right bank of the Indus, south of Peshawur. While admitting to the full the advantages which are to be derived from the control of the Punjab corps, and the defence of this frontier being vested in us, I have always shrunk from advocating the measure from the difficulties I felt we should have to encounter. No doubt, with a good Brigadier, one in whom we had confidence, and who would be prepared to carry out our views, these difficulties would be lessened. Still they seem to me to be considerable. Some of them are those which I have personally experienced, and which no one who has lived and mixed with military men can fail to admit. Public opinion is essentially military in India. Military views, feelings, and interests are therefore paramount. If matters go well, the credit will rest with the military ; if they go wrong, the blame is thrown on the civil power. The views of the Commander-in-Chief are essentially those of his cloth, perhaps a good deal exaggerated, but still their views. There is no security that the officer commanding in the field at any crisis may not be utterly incapable ; there is every possibility that, at times, he will be so, but the effects of his incapacity will be laid at the door of the civil administration. This is in the nature of things. Probably, if a soldier, I myself should join in the outcry. India has produced few abler or better men than Sir William Macnaghten. Had his advice been followed, the Kabul insurrection would have ended very differently. Yet, to this day his memory is maligned, and he is considered the cause of all the misfortunes which occurred. There are a thousand ways in which the military can thwart the civil officers, which it would be difficult to remedy and unwise to complain of. I say this in no bitterness, for, on the whole, I have been kindly dealt with ; but I have often felt that my honour and reputation were in the hands of a querulous old man.

The frontier is a post of danger ; it is therefore one of honour, and the military as a body will be ready to resent its being entrusted to us. They may acquiesce so long as all is quiet, but if anything goes wrong the feeling will be shown. Independently of these facts, the constitution of the Board is unfavourable to such a charge. We are told that in the multitude of counsellors there is safety ; but assuredly there is not much energy. Each man may take a different view of the question, and between conflicting opinions the time for action passes by. Promptitude and vigour, the very soul of military arrangements, will, I fear, be often wanting. If, therefore, your Lordship shall think fit to confide the defence of the frontier to the Board, I pray that one only of the members be invested with the duty.

There is hardly a single subject on which the members thoroughly concur. If they agree in theory, they differ in the mode of execution. My brother's temperament is very similar to my own, but we have been bred in two different schools. With a keener and higher order of intellect than mine, he is, from habit and ill health, unequal to systematic exertion. Mansel is contemplative and philosophic, but shrinks from action. I am restless and impatient, thinking nothing done if aught is left undone, and chafe at delay. Such being the elements which compose our Board, I feel averse to our having charge of the frontier, which will require much order and system, joined to vigour and promptitude of action.

I beg that your Lordship will not attribute my remarks to want of zeal. I cannot serve the State nor your Lordship more truly than by frankly stating my views. If we are to have the frontier, I suggest it be entrusted to my brother. I believe he would like the charge, and, judging of him by myself, I should say he would prefer the whole responsibility to sharing it with his colleagues.

In the spring of this year (1850) Henry Lawrence had set out on a prolonged visit to Kashmere. He was accompanied, during a part of it, by his wife and his daughter Honoria (now Mrs. Henry Hart), then an infant only six weeks old. Dr. Hathaway, who had been his Private Secretary, and was now surgeon to the civil station at Lahore, and Hodson, afterwards of Hodson's Horse, were also members of the party.

There were elements of romantic interest about the journey which exactly suited Henry Lawrence. The surpassing beauty of the scenery of Kashmere is now well known. But, at that time, hardly any Europeans had set foot in the country. It was a native state which had been saved from annexation, in part at least, by Henry Lawrence's own chivalrous exertions, and upon its throne sat the astute Golab Singh, whose misdeeds Henry Lawrence, as his patron, had been driven, by a somewhat cruel destiny, and with a strange conflict of feelings, now to condemn, and now, again, to extenuate and defend. The tour was prolonged farther northward still to Iskardo and Ladak, and the elements of romance seemed to multiply as the travellers advanced farther and farther into the region of the unknown. 'Five times over,' as Henry Lawrence writes exultingly to his brother George, he had been 'above 14,000 feet high,' he had given a dinner to some three hundred natives of those remote latitudes who traded with Yarkand—probably the most original and picturesque as well as the most costly and most difficult entertainment which even he, in

his boundless hospitality, had ever given—and he was looking forward to one on a still larger scale, which he was about to give to a mixed party of merchants and soldiers at Iskardo.

The adventurous and daring as well as the unscrupulous character of Hodson came out repeatedly during the journey. On one occasion, he climbed, at the imminent peril of his life, a snowy peak resembling that of the Matterhorn, on which, as Henry Lawrence afterwards remarked, 'none but a Hodson or an eagle would have thought of setting foot.' His fate reserved him for many a deed of higher daring still, but for a less happy end.

Another unpleasant element in the expedition was the correspondence with Lord Dalhousie which had preceded it. Henry had applied for leave of absence during the rainy season, in the hope that he might get the better of his attacks of fever, which had been more than usually severe; and Lord Dalhousie had demurred to the proposal on the ground that his habitual absence from Lahore for nearly half the year was incompatible with his office and unfair to his colleagues, who would not be able to stir from the capital till he returned. 'Of Mr. Mansel's habits I know nothing, but it is impossible that, after the active movements of your brother's life for so many years, imprisonment in one place can be otherwise than bad for him. Previous to your departure, therefore, before the rains, I would request that he would come up to Simla and meet me there.' Lord Dalhousie's consent was given grudgingly, and its tone may well have been resented by a man who was so unsparing of himself as Henry Lawrence. But his forebodings as to the danger to the younger brother's health proved true. The strain of unintermittent work for nearly ten years had begun to tell even on John Lawrence's iron constitution. The rains, which Henry had wished to avoid, ceased early, and then a terribly unhealthy season set in. The old cantonments at Anarkulli were devastated by disease, and Sir Charles Napier's new ones at Mean Meer fared even worse. At Wuzeerabad, Inglis declared that 'his whole office was prostrate,' and the natives throughout the Punjab suffered more even than the Europeans.

John Lawrence was one of the last to succumb. He had worked hard the whole summer through, and now, early in October, his turn came. It was a sharp attack of remittent fever. The symptoms rapidly developed; intense pain in the head and very high fever, followed by sickness and delirium. Those about him had begun to fear the worst, but a cold douche extemporised by Dr. Hathaway had

a magical effect. The fever and delirium disappeared almost instantaneously. He dropped off into a quiet sleep, and woke up out of danger. As is often the case with very strong men when attacked by illness, his strength had gone all at once, and it now returned almost as rapidly; and, by the 16th of the month, the day originally fixed, he was able to start for his long-projected tour with the Governor-General. Lord Dalhousie had peremptorily overruled his generous wish that his brother should go in his stead. 'I shall be delighted,' he wrote on September 16, 'to see you at Roopur, but I want also to have you with me in the latter part of the march. If your brother returns in October, he can accompany me to meet Golab at Wuzeerabad. After that, he must take his turn at Lahore. I wish for your presence with me.' Lord Dalhousie's wish was equivalent to a command, and, for the next six months, except during short intervals, when he ran down to Lahore, John Lawrence was to be found in the locomotive camp of the Governor-General, who had come to the Punjab with the intention of seeing as much as he possibly could.

What Lord Dalhousie thought of John Lawrence's services to the State, and what he felt towards him personally, is clear from the following letter, written on October 21—soon, that is, after he heard of his sudden and dangerous illness :—

I have not plagued you with any letter since I heard of your illness I need not say how deeply and truly I grieved to learn the severe attack you have suffered, and how anxious I shall be to learn again that you are improving during your march, and that you are not foolishly impeding your recovery by again returning to work. I am terrified at the thought of your being compelled to give up work and go home for a time, and I plead with you to spare yourself for a time as earnestly as I would plead to save my own right hand. Two of you have been working hard enough, Heaven knows, for the third; let the other two now take their turn of working for you. Keep enough work in your hands to employ you, but don't take so much as to burden you.

It is little to be wondered at that the Governor-General, when he realised the full danger to which his Lieutenant had been exposed, insisted that he should spend the next hot season, not in the fever-stricken furnace of Lahore, but amidst the cool breezes of Simla. And it may also be added, by way of anticipation, that it was the readiness of resource shown by Dr. Hathaway at the critical moment, as well as his aptitude for work, tested during a long and intimate acquaintance with him in India, which, fourteen years later, served to

recommend him for the post of Private Secretary to the man who had then just been called, by universal acclamation, to the highest post in the Indian Empire, that of Viceroy and Governor-General.

John Lawrence left Lahore with his wife, as I have mentioned, on October 16, just after his brother's return. Taking Umritsur and Jullundur on his way, and managing to do an infinity of work at each place, he joined the Governor-General, about the beginning of November, at Roopur, a small place on the Sutlej. The Governor-General's camp was a very large one. Besides his own retinue, it was attended by the principal officers of the district in which, from time to time, it happened to be, and John Lawrence thus found ample opportunities for consultation, alike with his chief and with his subordinates, on the pressing questions of the hour, as well as on the future prospects, of the country. I am unable to find in the papers entrusted to me any details of the places visited or of the work done during the next six months. There is a total absence of letters from October 1850 to November 1851; and it is natural that it should be so. Being so much with the Governor-General, John Lawrence had no need to write to Lord Dalhousie, or Lord Dalhousie to him. Henry Lawrence was at Lahore, and on him, therefore, naturally devolved the laborious correspondence—which, till now, had fallen chiefly on his brother—with the Commissioners, Deputy-Commissioners, and Assistant-Commissioners, who were coming and going, hither and thither to their various stations, like the figures in a transformation scene, or the pieces of glass in a kaleidoscope. And, once more, it should be remarked that John Lawrence had no private secretary, and that the copying of the letters to which this biography will, for some years to come, owe so much, was chiefly the work of his wife, who was only with him at intervals during this particular tour.

The arrangements for the Governor-General's march had formed the subject of frequent communication between John Lawrence and Lord Dalhousie for months past; and, from their letters, I gather that the programme consisted of a leisurely progress through the northern districts of the Punjab; of a prolonged stay at Lahore, 'with more opportunities,' remarks Lord Dalhousie, evidently much to his satisfaction, 'for business and less occasion for ceremonies than in the preceding year;' of visits to Wuzeerabad and Rawul Pindi; of a march thence by a newly constructed and difficult road to Kalabagh on the other side of the Indus, where the Governor-General intended, if possible, to alter for the better the arrangements made by the Board for

the salt-duties, 'the one slip,' according to him, 'which they had made at all;' finally, of a trip down the Indus in a steamboat to Dera Ismael Khan, where he wished to hold a Durbar of the hill chiefs of the Derajat. His plan was to return thence, if the disposition of the hill tribes allowed it, through the Derajat to Kohat and Peshawur; thence to travel over the line marked out for the Grand Trunk Road, between it and Attock; and, last of all, to reach Simla by a circuitous route through Huzara and Kashmere. This was an extensive programme, and the less ambitious parts of it appear to have been carried out. But the delicate and difficult passage through Kashmere was given up, owing to the opposition offered to it by the prudence of the Lawrence brothers. John Lawrence returned to Lahore for Christmas, while the Governor-General remained to finish his tour beyond the Indus.

The only interruption to the routine work of the following spring (1851) to which reference need be made here, was the visit of John Lawrence to Peshawur, where he spent a busy fortnight in examining the official records and criminal returns; in inspecting the fort, the jail, the cantonments, and the city; in making excursions with the Governor-General to Barra and Jumrood; and in conversing freely, as his manner was, with people of every grade and of all kinds of views. He found that that important position was not then—probably it is not even now—in an altogether satisfactory condition. The valley was held by a garrison of 10,000 Regulars; a force which it has never yet, I believe, been found practicable seriously to reduce. The physical characteristics of the country, intersected as it is by two large rivers and numerous hill-torrents, by deep ravines and rugged ridges, and surrounded on every side by mountains which afford a ready refuge to miscreants of all descriptions, marked it out as a den of murderers and marauders, which it was almost equally difficult for us to hold or to abandon. The Sikhs, who had preceded us in the occupation of the place and had called themselves, for a brief period, its masters, had never held a yard of country beyond the range of their military posts, and had never raised a rupee from either the highlanders or the lowlanders of the surrounding districts, except at the point of the sword. It was hardly to be wondered at, therefore, if, in spite of the moderation and justice of our rule, in spite of duties swept away, and lightened land-tax, in spite of the careful maintenance, in this part of our dominions at least, of the jagheers of the village, or district chiefs, so poor, so predatory, and so warlike a people had not been weaned from their immemorial habits. There were still

the eternal mountains, which formed an all but impenetrable fastness whence the inhabitants could sally forth on the less warlike people of the plains, and which offered, in their turn, an equally safe retreat to any lowlander who, laden with the plunder, or red-handed with the blood, of the hated Feringhis, might wish to claim amongst them the sacred right of the asylum. Accustomed as the natives were to redress their own wrongs, and utterly regardless of human life, we had found it impossible to disarm any portion of them. And thus the reign of violence, if it was ever to give way at all to the reign of law, could be expected to do so only by very slow degrees. Fifty-one cases of murder or dangerous wounding had taken place, as John Lawrence found, in the two months and a-half which preceded his arrival, and it was under such circumstances that he drew up two elaborate documents on the defence and organisation of the Peshawur district, the suggestions of which have been acted upon ever since, and have gradually succeeded in weaning—as far as in a generation or two they could be expected to do so—the wild marauders of the neighbourhood towards a more peaceful life. The levelling of the broken ground around the cantonments, so as to sweep away the lurking-place of the robber or the assassin; a vigorous system of police patrols both by night and day; a chain of fortified posts in the interior as well as along the frontier of the country; the strict limitations imposed on the wandering propensities of our officers and soldiers; the taking away of their arms from merchants from the hills when they reached our frontier stations, of course to be given back to them on their return; the strict responsibility of heads of villages for crimes committed within them; the occupation of Jumrood by Irregulars as the advanced picquet of the Peshawur force;—these were some of the precautions first suggested by John Lawrence, and which have, ever since, been more or less rigidly observed.

In April, John Lawrence followed his wife and family to Simla, and, here, he and they had the ineffable happiness—hardly, I suppose, to be understood by anyone who has not experienced it himself, or who has not suffered from the Indian sun as John Lawrence had always done—of spending the first of some twenty summers which had passed since he came to India, among the hills. The long walks, the pleasant society, the lovely climate of that earthly paradise, the kindness of Lord and Lady Dalhousie, the hard work done under conditions which seemed to make it no work at all, altogether went to form an oasis in his Indian life, on which she who enjoyed and

shared it with him can still, after thirty years have come and gone, look back with melancholy delight. But even here he was not to escape altogether from the effects of the deadly climate of Lahore. In September, he again broke down with a renewed attack of the fever of the preceding year, and the four doctors who attended him—Lord Dalhousie's physician among them—agreed that nothing but a return to England would restore him to health. 'If I cannot go to India and live there, I will go and die there,' he had said, ten years before, as a newly married man with no definite employment in view, when the doctors warned him not again to attempt the Indian climate. And it was not likely now, when the interests of a vast province in so large a measure depended on him, that he would think differently. Nothing should induce him, he said, to go home till he had done the work which he had then in hand; and, when once the fever had abated, he rallied so quickly that all thought of his return was given up, even by his doctors and his wife.

Lord Dalhousie, however, was not so easily satisfied, and, in his anxiety to spare one whose services he valued 'as he did his own right hand,' he wrote to the Directors of the East India Company, asking to allow his lieutenant to go home on exceptionally favourable terms. The request was refused on public grounds, but the refusal was accompanied by expressions which showed a high appreciation of John Lawrence's services. I insert here a few lines from one of his letters on this subject to Lord Dalhousie, chiefly because of the light it throws on what were then his plans for the future:—

I have made up my mind not to go home. It would, I think, be suicidal in me, at my age and with the claims which my children have on me, to do so. My health is very uncertain; I do not think that I have more than three or four years of good honest work left in me. In May, 1855, I shall have served my time, and be entitled to my annuity, and, by that time, I shall have saved a sufficiency for my own moderate wants and to bring up my children. Without making up my mind absolutely to retire at that period, I wish to be in a position to be able do so. If I go home now without pay, I shall come back to this country without the slightest chance of being able to retire as I propose, for I shall have to spend in my trip the best part of my savings. I am infinitely obliged for the kindness and consideration which led your Lordship to recommend the indulgence, and am gratified with the flattering manner in which it has been negatived.

It is difficult, now that the writer's long and deedful life is over,

to read without something akin to emotion the simple wishes and the humble prognostications of this letter; and it is more difficult still, even at the risk of anticipating what might, perhaps, come more fitly at the close of this biography, not to take a rapid glance forward at the amount of work which was really in store for him at the time when he wrote. The man who thought he had 'not more than three or four years of good honest work left in him,' and could not go to England to recruit his health without spending the best part of his savings in the process, was to work on in the Punjab with increased responsibility and power, not merely for three or four, but for seven years, doing each day as much as most men do in a dozen days, and, during the last two years, facing an amount of anxiety, of difficulty, and of danger which, by itself, would have been enough to make or mar any lesser man. When he returned home after the Mutiny, broken down in health, he was to recruit himself, not by rest, but by serving for four years in the Indian Council, bringing his vast experience and his sound judgment to bear on the difficult questions which had been raised by the transference of India from the Company to the Crown. At the end of that period of comparative repose, he was to return to India as Viceroy and Governor-General, and, for the full period of five years, was to work as hard and successfully as any Governor-General has ever worked. When he returned to England again, it was to descend at once from the most magnificent of Viceroyalties to the dull and thankless drudgery of the London School Board; and that, not because he had any special knowledge or natural bent for the subject of popular education, but because he felt there was good work and hard work to be done upon it. And then, once more, when his health had finally broken down, when his sight was nearly gone, and when he seemed to have set his face towards the grave, he was to rouse himself again at the trumpet-call of duty, and, regardless of obloquy and of misconception of every kind, was to work hard to the very end against a policy which he thought to be unjust, and to be fraught with danger and disaster to the best interests of England and of India. If any life was ever dignified from first to last with that kind of dignity which nothing but labour—honest, unsparing, unselfish labour—can give, that life was John Lawrence's.

By November, Lawrence returned to Lahore, visiting all the civil stations on the way, and bringing with him an infant son—Edward Hayes—who had been born, in June, at Simla. It was a lovely child, which had seemed from its very birth to call forth from beneath the

rugged exterior of his father that vein of tenderness which those who knew him well knew was always there. A child, particularly a young one, seemed often able—as a notable incident which I shall relate at a subsequent period of his life will show—to calm John Lawrence when he was most ruffled, and to cheer him when he was most wearied with the anxieties and the vexations of his daily work. This babe had been delicate from its birth—so delicate, that its mother feared now to expose it to the rough camp life which formed a principal part of the winter's work in the Punjab. Accordingly, while the father was roaming about his province in tents, the mother stayed at home to tend it.

> But, howsoe'er it was,
> After a lingering, ere she was aware,
> Like a caged bird escaping suddenly,
> The little innocent soul flitted away.

It was a crushing sorrow, and not to the mother alone. It was the first time that death had come into the Lawrence family. The strong man was broken down; and to the astonishment of those that did not know him well—but only to those—he was seen weeping like a child, as he followed the body to the grave. It was not often that John Lawrence was seen to shed tears; and I have thought it worth while, in the course of this biography, to specify the two or three occasions when he is known to have done so. But his tears were only the outward and intermittent signs of the perennial spring of tenderness which lay below; of a tenderness which was, perhaps, more real because it made so little show, and certainly gave more encouragement and more support to those on whom it was habitually lavished, because it was felt to be the tenderness, not of a weakling, but of a strong, rough-hewn man.

It was the first death. But it was not the first break in the family. For in the autumn of the year of annexation (1849), the inevitable severance, bitter almost as death, to which all Indian families must look forward, and that, too, at the time of life when the child most needs the parent, and the parent most misses the child, had taken place. The two eldest daughters had been sent off to England, under somewhat exceptional circumstances. It happened that Herbert Edwardes and John Nicholson were about to leave on furlough, and they volunteered to undertake a task, which not even such friends as the Lawrences would have ever thought of proposing to them—the trouble and responsibility of conveying the little girls to England.

'It was considered,' says Lady Lawrence, 'somewhat strange to send two little girls away with only two young men as their escort, but they were dear and trusted friends; and right nobly they fulfilled their trust, not minding the trouble and anxiety of little children, but tenderly caring for them all the way.' Their father accompanied them to Ferozepore, and there handed them over, with their ayah, to their kind escort, who conveyed them down the Indus to Bombay, and, thence, safely to England. And, assuredly, when we consider what young unmarried officers usually are like, and how utterly incapable they would be, even if they had the will, of undertaking such a charge, we shall be disposed to regard this as not the least characteristic, or the least lovable, passage in the lives of the young hero of Mooltan, or of the afterwards still more distinguished hero of Delhi.

During John Lawrence's sojourn at Simla in 1850, an important change had taken place in the *personnel* of the Board. I have already endeavoured to indicate the general characteristics of the third member of the triumvirate, and have pointed out how valuable must have been the makeweight which Mansel's evenly balanced and philosophic temperament offered to the more drastic and impetuous spirits which, for the time being, were linked to his. Both brothers appreciated highly his intellectual gifts, and regarded him with the most friendly feelings. But both looked upon him, also, as a drag upon the coach. They were always, or nearly always, for action; he was always, or nearly always, for talking about it. In every question which was brought before him he saw, like other men of his turn of mind, at least three possible courses; and the *tertium quid* on which he seemed inclined to settle, rather than ever actually did settle down at last, was generally one which did not suit precisely the views of either of his colleagues. When, as often happened, Henry Lawrence had one plan for the solution of a difficult problem, and John another, and they were both brought to Mansel for his deciding voice, he 'cushioned' both of them; that is to say, he put them into his pocket, and the question was shelved *sine die*. He would sometimes, as I have been told by an eye-witness, walk for an hour or two up and down the verandah in front of the Residency, arguing seriously against some project which Henry was pressing upon him with characteristic earnestness. At the end of the discussion, he would say quietly, 'Well, though I have been arguing thus with you, I have not been speaking my own views; I have only been showing you what might be said by John against your project;' and he would often do the same with John.

This method of procedure was not exactly suited to the proclivities of either brother. John Lawrence was fond enough of discussion, provided it were a preliminary to action, but Mansel's talk he knew well was apt to end in nothing else; and Henry, who was of a hotter temperament, and much more intolerant of opposition, in the vexation of the moment would sometimes regard Mansel's disputations as not only injurious, but insulting. Neither of the brothers, it will be seen, would have altogether approved of the Socratic method of inquiry, and both would, at times, have been disposed to elbow that impracticable philosopher out of their way, as an impediment to energetic and immediate action. When, therefore, the Residency at Nagpore fell vacant, in November, 1850, a post for which both brothers thought Mansel better suited, they agreed in asking Lord Dalhousie to send him thither. Lord Dalhousie assented, and Mansel took the appointment with, probably, not a little feeling of relief.

Indeed, the third place in the Board can have been no bed of roses to its occupant, whoever he might be. Henry Lawrence himself, speaking from his own experience, called it a bed of thorns; and, by a strange coincidence, there stepped into it the man who had been a friend of the Lawrence family from his earliest boyhood; had been at Foyle College with both Henry and John Lawrence; had known the wives of both while they were still young girls living in his own neighbourhood amidst the wilds of Donegal; had kept up his affectionate interest in them and in their husbands while he was gradually rising from one post of duty to another with a rapidly increasing reputation in the North-West; had been, on Henry Lawrence's recommendation, summoned to Lahore when the annexation of the Punjab took place, and had now, during the last year and a-half, as the Commissioner of the most central and most important district of the annexed province, been brought into close official connection with both him and John. He was thus marked out by his antecedents, by his actual position, and by his promise for the future, to be their colleague on the Board; and so he stepped, as of natural right, into the vacant seat.

Attached by ties of enthusiastic admiration and love to Henry Lawrence, and by strong affection as well as by general aptitudes, by official training and by views of State policy, to John, he seemed pre-eminently the man to get on well with both, to pour oil upon the troubled waves, and, if he could not altogether remove, at least to lessen, the rubs and annoyances, the heart-burnings and the mis-

conceptions, which, if they had hitherto worked admirably for the State, had not worked equally well for the peace of mind of those who held the reins of power. With an appetite for work sufficient to satisfy the demands of the Lawrences themselves, and, perhaps, an even greater facility for getting through it; with a readiness of resource which never failed; with an equanimity which was depicted even on his countenance and could never be ruffled; and with a courage which never allowed him to doubt that things, even when they looked most desperate, would, somehow, come right at last, and which forced those who were of a less sanguine temperament to share his confidence,—he seemed marked out for the place he was to fill, even if the profound peace which then reigned in the Punjab should be succeeded by a time of trouble. No one then foresaw—it was impossible that they could have foreseen—the storm which, some years afterwards, was to burst over India; but even if it had been foreseen, and its exact course predicted, it is doubtful whether any man could have been found in the whole of the country so admirably adapted to fill the precise niche which he did fill when the outbreak came. If there is any one act in the long roll of the brilliant achievements of the lieutenants of John Lawrence during the Mutiny which may be singled out from the rest as having been done exactly at the time, at the place, and in the manner in which it ought to have been done —as having been planned with caution as well as courage, and carried out with triumphant success, and so, as having given, at the very beginning of the struggle, an omen of its ultimate result—that act was the disarmament of the sepoys at Lahore on the morning of May 13, 1857; and the man to whom, by universal consent, next after General Corbett, with whom the chief responsibility rested, it was pre-eminently due, was Robert Montgomery.

It is difficult, as one thinks of the three men thus brought, after such widely different, but such laborious and such uphill lives, to sit together at the same Council Board, not to let the imagination leap back again and again to the primitive country school, with its rough amusements, its meagre education, and its spirit-stirring associations, which I have attempted to describe in the first chapter of this biography. And I am fortunately able here to relate an anecdote which will, I think, not allow anyone who reads it, ever afterwards to forget that the triumvirate of Lahore had also been a triumvirate at Foyle College, or that the two great brothers who could not agree in some matters of public policy were at least agreed in what is more impor-

tant—in common memories and common affection, in gratitude for services, however humble and however long gone by, and in a generosity which, in the case of the elder brother, was limited only by all that his purse contained ; in the case of the younger, only by a sense of the rival claims which other objects might have upon it. I owe the anecdote, in the first instance, to Dr. Charles Hathaway, the one eye-witness on the occasion. But I may add that its accuracy is also vouched for by the one survivor of the triumvirate, Sir Robert Montgomery, who, at this distance of time, had nearly forgotten the circumstances, but to whom, when once the fountains of memory were tapped, they have come back with nearly their original freshness.

On December 25, 1851, the three members of the Board and their wives were taking their Christmas dinner together at the old Residency house at Anarkulli. The host was, of course, the President, Sir Henry Lawrence ; and the only other guest present was Dr. Hathaway, the civil surgeon. The ladies had retired, and there had been a few minutes' silence, when Sir Henry turned abruptly to his brother, and said, 'I wonder what the two poor old Simpsons are doing at this moment, and whether they have had any better dinner than usual to-day!' The Simpsons, it must be explained, were twin brothers in very humble circumstances, who had been ushers in Foyle College. The life of an usher in a private school, never a very easy one, was not likely to have been more than usually pleasant amidst a lot of rough Irish boys ; and the Lawrences, in particular, were fully conscious that, in their exuberant boyish spirits, they had not done as much as they might to make a galling yoke easy, or a heavy burden light. Sir Henry's sudden apostrophe awakened many old memories of the school life at Londonderry ; and, after a few remarks had been made upon the singular coincidence, that the three men who had been at school together as boys so many years back, now found themselves associated together once more as the rulers of the Punjab, Henry Lawrence, with the impulsive generosity which formed so prominent a part of his character, exclaimed, 'I'll tell you what we'll do. The Simpsons must be very old, and, I should think, nearly blind ; they cannot be well off ; let us each put down 50*l.* and send it to them to-morrow as "a Christmas-box from a far-off land, with the good wishes of three of their old pupils, now members of the Punjab Board of Administration at Lahore."' 'All right,' said John, 'I'll give 50*l.*' 'All right,' said Montgomery, 'I'll give another.'

The cheques were drawn and exchanged on the morrow for a Treasury remittance-note on England, which was duly despatched.

The kind message with its enclosure found its way safely across the ocean. Weeks passed by, each spent in hard work and rough work, and the subject was nearly forgotten, when one morning, amongst the pile of letters brought in by the dawk, there was one bearing an Irish post-mark. It was from the old Simpson brothers at Londonderry. The characters were written in a tremulous hand, and, in many places, were almost illegible from the writer's tears, which had evidently fallen almost faster than he wrote. That letter, if it could be found, would be worth publishing. Very possibly, it was preserved by Sir Henry; and had it not been for the unfortunate circumstances under which his papers were passed about from hand to hand, in order that a record of his life might be handed down to posterity, it might, perhaps, be found among them now. But the memory of him to whom I owe the story has carefully preserved, through the lapse of thirty years, its general drift and its most salient points. It began: 'My dear, kind boys;' but the pen of the old man had afterwards been drawn through the word 'boys,' and there had been substituted for it the word 'friends.' It went on to thank the donors, in the name of his brother as well as of himself, for their most generous gift, which, he said, would go far to keep them from want during the short time that might be left to them; but, far above the actual value of the present, was the preciousness of the thought that they had not been forgotten by their old pupils, in what *seemed* to be the very high position to which they had risen. He did not know what the 'Board of Administration' meant, but he felt sure it was something very important; and he added, in a postscript to his letter, with childlike simplicity, that he had looked out the Punjab in 'the old school atlas,' which they had so often used together, but he could not find either it or Lahore! 'Oh,' said Sir Henry, when he came to this part in the letter, to his friend Dr. Hathaway, who happened again to be present, 'if you could only see, as I can see it now, that grimy old atlas, grown still more grimy by its use during the thirty years which have passed since I knew it, and the poor old fellow trying to find in it what it does not contain!'

It only remains to be added—and it gives a touching finish to the story—that the writer of the letter, old as he was, lived on till he saw one of his three pupils in the flesh once more; and that, when the citizens of Londonderry were giving a banquet to Sir Robert

Montgomery, who had just then returned from India, with the honours of the Mutiny thick upon him, the half-blind old schoolmaster managed, with the help of a ticket that had been given him, to be present also. His purse may have been as empty, but his heart must certainly have been as full as that of any of the assembled guests; and it may safely be asserted that, by this time, he hardly needed to look into 'the old school atlas' to find where the Punjab lay; for it was from the Punjab that India had been saved, and it was to his three old pupils and benefactors, Henry Lawrence, John Lawrence, and Robert Montgomery, that its salvation was admitted to be chiefly due. He died very shortly afterwards, happy that he had lived on, like Ulysses' faithful dog of old, to see the day of his pupil's, or of his lord's return.[1]

In January, 1852, Lord Stanley (now the Earl of Derby), who was then making a tour in India, visited Lahore, and was, for a few days, the guest of John Lawrence. It was here that he saw for the first time the man whom, on his return to England, seven years later, he was to appoint to the newly formed Indian Council, and whom, twenty years later again, in his admirable speech at the 'Lawrence Memorial' meeting at the Mansion House, he was to describe in two words, which, in my opinion, hit off better than any others that which was most essential in John Lawrence's character. 'Without,' said Lord Derby, 'claiming any special intimacy with Lord Lawrence, I may say, as the world goes, that I knew him well, and the impression that his character always left on my mind I can only describe as that of a certain *heroic simplicity*.' Lord Dalhousie, in anticipation of Lord Stanley's visit to the Punjab, had written previously to both the brothers, begging them, if possible, to prevent his extending his travels to the dangerous North-West frontier, on which the Mohmunds and the Swattis were just then giving trouble. 'If any ill-starred accident should happen,' said he, 'it would make a good deal of difference whether it happened to Lord Stanley and Sir Henry Lawrence or to John Tomkins and Bill Higgins.' But British India is, happily, not like Russian Turkestan; and not even the most cautious Governor-General would think of putting anything but moral impediments in the way of any visitor, English or Russian, who might wish

[1] I have been informed since the publication of the first edition, that a fourth 50*l.* note was afterwards added to 'the Simpson Fund' by a fourth old pupil, the present Sir George Lawrence, who had recently, as I have related, left the Punjab, after a serious illness, for Rajpootana.

to see any part of his dominions. 'Lord Stanley,' writes John Lawrence in reply to the Governor-General, 'has just left us after seeing all that was to be seen at Lahore. He will join my brother in Huzara and then go with him *viâ* Peshawur to the Derajat ; he was not to be dissuaded from the Kohat pass.' It was the last tour, as it turned out, that Henry Lawrence was ever to take along the frontier of the province which he loved, and which loved him so well.

There is little of general or even of biographical interest in the correspondence which passed between John Lawrence and the Governor-General while his elder brother was absent on this and a subsequent tour in the interior. The Mohmunds and Swattis and 'fanatics of Sitana,' afterwards so famous, had been showing signs of hostility, and John Lawrence, as his letters prove, was in favour of offensive operations against them, from which Sir Colin Campbell, with his usual caution, seemed to shrink.

It is quite clear how averse Sir Colin Campbell is to entering the hills at all. Whatever reasons he may give, his real one is a want of confidence in the Regular Native Infantry. This feeling is not only shared by nearly all the Queen's officers but by many of the Company's officers also. I believe, if they expressed their real opinion, they would prefer going with any infantry but the Regulars. The Guides, Ghoorkas, Punjab Irregulars, are all thought more of for hill warfare than the Regulars. Would it not then, my Lord, be well to reduce the number of the latter, and increase our Irregular infantry? I would not advocate too large a reduction of the Regulars. Their fidelity and habits of obedience will always make them valuable, but a mixture of troops of other races would make our army more efficient in time of war, and quite as safe in peace. . . . I feel convinced that until we do inflict a real chastisement on either the Mohmunds or Swattis, the Peshawur valley will never be tranquil, and the longer the punishment is delayed, the more manifest this will be. I cannot believe that it would be a difficult matter to effect our object, if we only go at it with a real will.

About this time, George Edmonstone, the able Commissioner of the Cis-Sutlej States, fell ill and was obliged to contemplate a visit to England, and the arrangements for filling his place, and that of the still more important Commissionership of Lahore, rendered vacant by the elevation of Montgomery, occupied very much of John Lawrence's time and thoughts. He brought the claims of all possible candidates before Lord Dalhousie, with whom the patronage rested, with judicial impartiality, and, after weighing them in his own mind,

ended by recommending George Barnes for the one appointment, and Charles Raikes, Collector of Mynpoorie, and formerly, as will be remembered, his own assistant at Paniput, for the other. Henry Lawrence was inclined to recommend different arrangements, but the Governor-General, as usual, agreed with John.

It is hopeless (John Lawrence had written to him) to look for results of real value, unless the Commissioner is a first-rate officer, thoroughly understanding that which he has to teach. In looking back on the past three years since annexation, I feel that we owe much to these officers. We may lay down rules and principles, but these fall still-born to the ground without Commissioners to explain their scope and meaning and see them carried out. The progress in each Division has been in a direct proportion to the zeal, the energy, and the experience of its Commissioners.

I write to your Lordship frankly and openly. I feel that the good of the country and my own reputation depend on the men who are selected for high employment. . . . Thornton has excellent qualities. He is a good revenue officer, perhaps the best we have, and is efficient in all departments. His main excellence is the pains he takes to instruct and train the men under him.

It may be convenient here, and it is certainly just and right, now that we have reached the time when the Board which had done such splendid work in the Punjab was about to be swept away, to bring together the names of the more prominent or more promising of those officers to whom the Lawrence brothers were so anxious to put it on record that a large part of their success was due. Many of their names have occurred before in this biography; many of them will occur again and again, some, as among the foremost heroes, military or civil, of the Mutiny, some, as excellent generals in India or outside of it, some, as able administrators of provinces as vast or vaster than the Punjab itself, others, again, as civil engineers, as writers, as explorers, as statesmen—but all of them connected by ties of friendship or respect with the subject of this biography, and all of them, also, fellow-workers with him in a school where there was no room for the unwilling, the laggard, the incompetent.

Of the seven Commissionerships, then, into which the whole annexed Sikh territory had been divided, Lahore had fallen, at first, to Montgomery and, afterwards, to Raikes, Jhelum to Edward Thornton, Mooltan to Edgeworth, Leia and the Derajat to Ross, Peshawur and Huzara to Mackeson, the Cis-Sutlej, at first, to Edmonstone and, afterwards, to Barnes, the Trans-Sutlej, John Lawrence's own first post of dignity, to Donald Macleod.

But many of the subordinate positions were held by men who were quite as promising, and some of them have risen to even greater distinction than those I have already mentioned. Such were men like Robert Napier and Neville Chamberlain, John Nicholson and Herbert Edwardes, George Macgregor and James Macpherson, George Lawrence and Harry Lumsden, John Becher and Alexander Taylor, James Abbott and Saunders Abbott, Crawford Chamberlain and Reynell Taylor, George Campbell and Richard Temple, Henry Davies and Robert Cust, Edward Lake and George Barnes, Hercules Scott and Richard Lawrence, Lewin Bowring and Edward Brandreth, Richard Pollock, Hugh James, and Douglas Forsyth. Never, probably, in the whole history of our Indian Empire, have there been so many able men collected together within the limits of a single province, and never has there been a province which could, with so little favour, open to so many able men so fair a field.

But the Lawrence brothers, whose fame had brought all these distinguished men together, and had made employment in the Punjab to be an object of ambition throughout India, had now, as it seemed, pretty well completed such good work for it as they could do best in double harness. The Board had never been looked upon either by Lord Dalhousie, who established it, or by the members of which it was composed, as more than a provisional arrangement to meet temporary needs. These needs it met, as I have already pointed out, in a way in which no other arrangement would have done. Under its rule, the country had quieted down. Its fierce and fanatical soldiers had become peaceful agriculturists. The military arrangements for the defence of the frontier, and the police arrangements for the suppression of crime and the preservation of order, had been almost completed. Organised brigandage and violent crime had ceased to exist. The land-tax had been lightened, and the whole revenue arrangements overhauled. Material improvements of every kind—bridges, roads, canals, courts of justice, barracks, schools, hospitals, asylums—had been projected and had been taken in hand. The old order, in fact, had already changed, and had given place to the new; and, if much still remained to be done, the country had been fairly launched on a career of peaceful progress and contentment. And now a normal state of things throughout the newly annexed province seemed to call for a less abnormal government than that of a Board.

These general considerations in favour of a change derived fresh

force from the idiosyncrasies of the triumvirate. The differences of temperament, of training, of aptitude, and of methods of work, which had been pretty well apparent between the brothers before the Board was formed, were forced into prominence as soon as it met, and became more and more marked as the work grew under their hands, and all pointed to the dissolution of a partnership as the best, though a melancholy, cure for a state of things which had become intolerable to the partners. The advent of Montgomery, the lifelong friend of the two brothers, full of promise as it had seemed at the moment, made things worse rather than better, at all events to the mind of the brother who had first summoned him to the Punjab. Montgomery was, in a special sense, the friend of Henry. But his training and general views of policy tended to make him in almost all disputed questions agree with John. Recommended by Henry for the Board in the hope that he would oppose John's views, it turned out that, like Balaam, he blessed him altogether, and Henry Lawrence, one of whose besetting faults, as it appears to me, was an inability, at times, to distinguish between honest disagreement and personal or interested antagonism, seemed to feel, once and again, that, like Ahithophel, his own familiar friend had lifted up his heel against him.

The question of public policy on which, as I have often pointed out, the two brothers differed most was that of the treatment of the jagheerdars, or men who, under the native system of government, had received in return for services—past, present, or future, rendered or only imagined—a lien on the land revenue of particular districts. It was a question beset with difficulties everywhere, but more particularly so in the Punjab, where tenures of the kind were unusually numerous and important. A large part of Runjeet Sing's army had consisted of cavalry contingents furnished by chiefs who had held their lands by this kind of feudal tenure. The principal ministers of the Lahore Court, the families of Runjeet Sing's chief warriors, the wives, widows, and concubines of himself and his three shadowy successors, the royal barber and the royal apothecary, the royal astrologer and the cook who had invented a new dish which suited the royal palate, Brahmins and fakirs, schools and charitable institutions, were all supported, at the time of annexation, not by payments in hard cash from the treasury, but by alienations of the land-tax, or, to speak more accurately, by the right given to the incumbents to squeeze as much revenue as they could out of a given district. These aliena-

tions had, sometimes, been continued by the native rulers from generation to generation, sometimes, they had been immediately and arbitrarily resumed. But, in all cases, it was within the power of the Government to recall them at its pleasure. Such a system might suit a government which cared only for a revenue which it should be no trouble to collect, and for an army which it should be no trouble to raise and to maintain, but such could not be the methods or the objects of the English Government. The Sikhs administered the country by means of jagheerdars, and paid them by their jagheers; the English administered it by highly paid British officers, at the same time that they endeavoured to lower the land-tax, and to introduce grand material reforms. Was it possible to combine the two methods of government? This is the kernel of the whole question, and on the answer given to it will depend the verdict that we give on the chief cause of dispute between the brothers.

It was, of course, a question of degree rather than of kind between them. Certain general principles were laid down by the Supreme Government which seem, under the circumstances, to have been liberal enough. For instance, all authorised grants to former rulers and all State pensions were to be maintained in perpetuity so long as the object of the endowment was fulfilled. It was in the details of the cases which could not be fixed by any hard and fast rule, and were wisely left for special consideration, that the two brothers came most into collision. In these, Henry, alike from temperament and from policy, always leaned to the view most favourable to the jagheerdar. John leaned, in like manner, to the view most favourable to the interests of the masses, and therefore also to the objects of the English Government.

The preliminary inquiries which had to be instituted were of portentous proportions. There were some ten thousand cases of pensions alone, not to speak of an indefinite number of jagheers, varying in size from a province to a village. Herbert Edwardes had been especially appointed to conduct the preliminary inquiry in each case, and, when he was wanted elsewhere, John Becher succeeded to the duty. Becher, whose general sympathies were more in accord with Henry, usually recommended a settlement very much in favour of the jagheerdar. He would take the case first to the President, who was working in one room of the Residency, and who always countersigned his recommendation; he then took it to John, who was working in an adjoining room, and who would say, with a merry

twinkle of his eye which no one appreciated more than John Becher himself, 'Ah, I see you want to get over me and let these lazy fellows waste the public money. No, I won't have it; sweep it away!' Becher then took the case to Montgomery, who generally agreed with John. Thus it happened, as Richard Temple once acutely remarked to Herbert Edwardes, that, in these matters, while each brother was a salutary check on the other, they, at the same time, confirmed each other's faults. Henry was more lavish in his proposals because he thought that John would attempt to cut them down, whatever their nature, and John was more hard and economical upon parallel reasoning.

The advent of Montgomery, in October 1851, and the attempt made by John, in the interests of peace, to procure a division of labour, had seemed, for the moment, to lessen the friction. But it was for the moment only. In May 1852—in the interval, that is, between his last tour to the Derajat frontier and that to Dhurmsala—Henry wrote to Montgomery a long letter of complaint against John, with the request that he would show it to the delinquent; and John replied on the following day, at much greater length, carrying the war into the enemy's country, and ending with a similar request. Montgomery, 'a regular buffer,' as he humorously describes himself, 'between two high-pressure engines,' in forwarding John's reply to Henry, gave him some wise advice, in every word of which those who know him well may see the man. 'Read it,' he said, 'gently and calmly, and I think you had better not answer it. I doubt not that you could write a folio in reply, but there would be no use. With your very different views you must both agree to differ, and when you happen to agree, be thankful. It had been far happier for me were your feelings on public matters more in unison. I am happy to be a friend of you both. Though differing from you often, I have never found you judge me harshly. I try to act as fairly and conscientiously as I can, and would, in my heart, much rather agree than differ from you.'

It is hardly necessary to say, that, in spite of this good advice, a folio *was* written in reply. But the ever-ready peacemaker asked permission not to show a letter which he thought would only make matters worse. 'I will tell John, verbally, that you told me that you felt hurt at his letter, and will mention some of the most prominent of your remarks as mildly as I can.' Never surely did any 'buffer' do such highly moral work, or strive so manfully to keep two high-pressure engines from injuring each other!

Extracts from the correspondence, sufficient to show its general purport, have been given by Herman Merivale in his Life of Sir Henry; and, like him, I see no good end which could be answered by publishing, at this distance of time, the exact charges and countercharges brought against each other by two high-spirited and noble-minded brothers, whose devotion to each other was, after all, only less than their devotion to what each considered to be his public duty.

> Non nostrum inter vos tantas componere lites.
> Et tu dignus, et hic.

Many of the faults alleged, such as the interference of one brother with the duties of the other, were no faults at all, but were the result of the purest benevolence; others, if they were faults, were, at least, faults on virtue's side, and turned out to be most advantageous to the public interest; others, again, existed only in the heated imagination of the writer. What portion of the mutual recriminations I deem to have been, to some extent, well founded—the uncontrolled temper, the personal antagonism, the desultoriness and dilatoriness in office work of Henry; the bluntness even to a fault, the masterful spirit, the unbending will, and the imperfect sympathy with men who were the victims of a bad system, of John, I have endeavoured to indicate in the course of the foregoing narrative. I feel that I am acting more in the spirit of Montgomery's advice, and, at the same time, doing what each brother would, in his cooler moments, have preferred, if, instead of reproducing their heated recriminations, I quote here rather a letter written by John to Lord Dalhousie, as far back as November 23, 1849—a few months only, that is, after annexation—which states, with judicial fairness, the differences which, even then, he felt that no efforts could bridge over, and, at the same time, shows how ready he was to be thrown overboard, like Jonah, if, by that means, the ship of the State might be enabled to carry more sail and proceed more cheerily on her voyage:—

My Lord,—I have the honour to acknowledge your Lordship's kind note of the 20th, and to beg to offer my sincere thanks for the handsome terms in which you have been good enough to express your sense of my exertions. It is, unquestionably, a source of gratification to know that one's services, however humble, are appreciated by those best qualified to judge. Your Lordship may be assured that, so long as I remain at Lahore, my best exertions shall never be wanting in whatever berth it may be my fortune to fall.

I have, all my life, been a hard worker, and it has now become a second nature to me. I work, therefore, as much from habit as from principle. My constitution is naturally a strong one, and I have never tried it unfairly. But it requires a good deal more exercise and work out of doors than I am now able to afford time for.

Had I followed the dictates of my own feelings, I would have retained my old berth in the Trans-Sutlej territory, where my duties so happily blended mental with physical exertion. This post had no charms for me; the solitary one, that of ambition, no longer existed when Mr. Mansel was appointed above me. I felt, however, that it was the post of honour, that I was expected to accept it, and that to have refused would have led to misconceptions. Having done so, I have endeavoured to discharge the duties to the best of my ability. How onerous these duties are, few can understand who are not behind the scenes. There are many drawbacks to my position, however high and honourable, independent of that of health, particularly to a man of decided opinions and peculiar temperament. If I know myself, I believe I should be happier and equally useful to the State if I thought and acted on my own bottom. I am not well fitted by nature to be one of a triumvirate. Right or wrong, I am in the habit of quickly making up my mind on most subjects, and feel little hesitation in undertaking the responsibility of carrying out my views. The views of my brother, a man far abler than I am, are, in many respects, opposed to mine. I can no more expect that, on organic changes, he will give way to me, than I can to him. He is my senior in age, and we have always been staunch friends. It pains me to be in a state of antagonism towards him. A better and more honourable man I don't know, or one more anxious to discharge his duty conscientiously; but, in matters of civil polity of the first importance, we differ greatly. With Mr. Mansel I am on excellent terms; but his views incline more to my brother's than my own. Thus I have not only my own work to do, but have to struggle with my colleagues. This is not good for the public service. Its emergencies require a united and vigorous administration.

I have no claims on your Lordship's patronage, but if there is another post available in which my talents and experience can be usefully employed, I shall be glad to be considered a candidate. I have always had the credit of some administrative talent, and for the three years previous to annexation not only brought my own charge—the Trans-Sutlej territory—into the flourishing condition it is in now, but, for many months, during the two first years, was also employed at Lahore, on duties foreign to my own post. Had I been a soldier and not a civilian, I should have received rank and honours. Men who were my assistants, who were commencing their career then, have gained them, and justly.

When the late Governor-General left India, the last letter he wrote was to me, thanking me for my services, and telling me that, had he remained,

he would have served me. Though a little vexed at the mode in which Sir Frederick Currie superseded me at Lahore, I felt no very anxious desire for the berth; for I knew too well its difficulties and dangers, and was satisfied with what I had. I feel myself now in a false position, and would be glad to extricate myself, if I can do it with honour.

I would not have thus intruded my hopes and wishes on your Lordship but for the consideration I have experienced at your hands. I will not further weary your Lordship with my affairs. I will simply add, that, if it is necessary that I stay at Lahore, I will do so with cheerfulness, and fulfil my duties as long as health and strength may last.

Lord Dalhousie shelved the request thus pathetically made by the just and pregnant remark that, however the brothers might suffer, the result was unquestionably beneficial to the public. And so the public-spirited John clung gallantly to the ship which did, for another three years, speed steadily on her course, but with ever-increasing strain to those who had to work her and to stand in all weathers at the helm. At last, in December 1852, the crisis came. The Residency at Hyderabad fell vacant, and both brothers wrote—almost simultaneously—to Lord Dalhousie, requesting him to transfer one or other of them to the vacant post. Each avowed frankly his own preference for the Punjab, but each expressed his readiness and even anxiety to leave it rather than prolong the existing state of things. Make any arrangement, was the upshot of their request, by which we may yet do good service to the State, but let it be in lines where our different views may obtain their appropriate field. John wrote to Courtenay, the Secretary to the Governor-General. The letter is long, but it is important, and I quote the greater part of it:—

Lahore: December 5, 1852.

My dear Courtenay,—The circumstance that General Fraser is about to leave Hyderabad has led me to a hope, perhaps a vain one, that it may give an opening for some change in my present position. I am well aware how decidedly the Governor-General was, last year, opposed to my leaving the Punjab, and how much kindness he showed me in giving Mansel Nagpore. But it is just possible that the same objections may not appear so cogent now. Be this as it may, I feel a strong desire to explain to you the perplexities of my situation. My brother and I work together no better than we formerly did. Indeed, the estrangement between us has increased. We seldom meet, and still more seldom discuss public matters. I wish to make no imputation against him. His antecedents have been so different from mine, we have been trained in such different schools, that there are few questions of internal policy connected with the adminis-

tration on which we coincide. I have now, as I have always had since annexation, a very large portion of the work to do. I have endeavoured, but in vain, to secure a division of labour, not simply because I was impatient of advice, or averse to hear the opinions of my colleagues, but because I found it was the only way to prevent continual collision. I can understand each member working his own department, enjoying the credit of success, and responsible for failure. I can understand three members working in unison who have a general unity of view, and the work of all thereby lightened. But what I feel is the mischief of two men brought together, who have both strong wills and views diametrically opposed, and whose modes and habits of business do not conform.

The Governor-General once remarked to me that, however much we might both suffer from such a state of things, the result has been publicly beneficial. It may have been so, but this is daily becoming less apparent. You once remarked that had I given way more, it was not improbable that my brother would, ere this, have gone home. But this is a mistake. He will stay in India as long as he can. He does not like England; his wife absolutely dislikes it. He will live and die in harness, as I have often heard him express it. But, setting all this aside, I should be sincerely sorry to benefit at his expense. Moreover, it would have been neither honourable nor becoming to have given up my deeply rooted and long-considered views of public matters in the hope of personal benefit. The result, also, in the administration would have proved different. Our antagonism has had the effect of securing a middle course, but it has lessened the force of the administration; it has delayed the despatch of business, and given rise to anomalies and inconsistencies in our correspondence and policy, and lessened the influence we should possess over our subordinates. To me, this state of things has been so irksome, so painful, that I would consent to great sacrifices to free myself. I care not how much work I have, how great may be my responsibilities, if I have simply to depend on myself; but it is killing work always pulling against wind and tide, always fighting for the unpopular and ungrateful cause.

I am the member of the Board for economy even to frugality; my brother is liberal even to excess. I see that the expenses of the country are steadily increasing, and its income rather decreasing, and thus, that useful and necessary expenditure must be denied. I am constantly urged to give my countenance to measures I deem inexpedient, and my refusal is resented as personally offensive. I am averse to passing any questions, to recommending any measure, without scrutiny; this necessity is not felt by my brother, or he satisfies himself by a shorter process, and, hence, I have to toil through every detail. Even when I go away for a time I gain little, for I still carry my own immediate work, and, when I return, find accumulated arrears.

If I feel so heavily the discomfort of my position, my brother is equally sensible of his own. He thinks he has not that power and influence which, as President, he should have, or which his general ability and force of character should ensure for him. He deems himself checked and trammelled on all sides. . . . If Hyderabad is not thought suited to me or is wanted for another, I shall be glad of any berth which may fall vacant. Rajpootana, Lucknow, Indore, would, any of them, delight me. I would even accept a Commissionership, and go back to the humdrum life of the North-West, if I can do so with honour. My first impulse was to write to the Governor-General. On reflection, I prefer addressing you. A refusal through you will, perhaps, be less distressing than one from his Lordship. You can say as little or as much to him as you think fit. He has always treated me with frankness and consideration, nor do I wish him to think me insensible of such treatment. I can write to you with more ease than would be becoming if I addressed his Lordship.

The two resignations being thus practically placed together in Lord Dalhousie's hands, it remained for him to make the embarrassing choice, which he had so long managed to postpone, between them. Had it still been his wish to prolong the existence of the Board, his choice would hardly have been doubtful between the soldier who disagreed with so much of his policy and the civilian who heartily approved of it. But he had long since made up his mind, when a convenient opportunity should occur, to dissolve the Board itself now that its work was done, and to substitute for it the rule of a single man. This made his decision to be almost beyond the possibility of doubt. No conscientious Governor-General would be likely to confide the destinies of so vast and so important a province to the supreme command of a man with whom he was only half in sympathy, and to whom, owing to the differences between them, he had never given more than half his confidence, when there was a rival candidate on whom he could place the most implicit reliance, and with whom he could feel the fullest sympathy. The Hyderabad vacancy had already been filled up by the appointment of Colonel Low, but the 'Agency to the Governor-General in Rajpootana,' a post, in many respects, admirably suited to a man who had such keen sympathy with native dynasties and which required its occupant to travel about all the cool season, and allowed him to rest all the hot in the pleasant retreat of Mount Aboo, was offered to Henry Lawrence instead.

But Rajpootana was not the Punjab. It was not the country in which he had made warm personal friends by thousands, and round

which the labours and the aspirations of a lifetime had gathered. What booted it that his salary as Agent was to be made equal to that which he had had as member of the Board ; that the work was less heavy and less trying ; and that the Governor-General, by way of sugaring the bitter pill which he had to swallow, told him that if Sir Thomas Munro himself had been a member of the Board, he would still have been driven to appoint 'a trained civilian' in preference to him as Chief Commissioner? All this was like so much vinegar poured into his open wounds ; for Henry Lawrence, if he was not 'a trained civilian,' and if he failed therefore in the more mechanical parts of a civilian's duty—method, accuracy of detail, continuous application—seems to have been altogether unconscious of the failure; and it is not too much to say that, for twenty years past, he had filled civil and political offices in the North-West, on the Punjab frontier, and in the Punjab itself, in a way in which few civilians in India could have filled them. His life was, henceforward, to be a wounded life, and he carried with him to the grave a bitter sense of what he thought was the injury done to him by Lord Dalhousie. Perhaps he would have been more or less than human if it had not been so. But if he needed any assurance of the way in which his work had told, and of the impress which he would leave behind him in the country of his choice, it would have been given by the scene which, as more than one person who was present has described it to me, was witnessed at Lahore when the decision of Lord Dalhousie—fully expected, yet almost stupefying when it came, quite justified by the facts, yet, naturally enough, resented and condemned—was made known there. Grief was depicted on every face. Old and young, rich and poor, soldiers and civilians, Englishmen and natives, each and all felt that they were about to lose a friend. Strong men, Herbert Edwardes conspicuous amongst them, might be seen weeping like little children ; and when the last of those last moments came, and Henry Lawrence, on January 20, 1853, accompanied by his wife and sister, turned his back for ever upon Lahore and upon the Punjab, a long cavalcade of aged native chiefs followed him, some for five, some for ten, others for twenty or twenty-five miles out of the city. They were men, too, who had nothing now to hope from him, for the sun of Henry Lawrence had set, in the Punjab at least, for ever. But they were anxious to evidence, by such poor signs as they could give, their grief, their gratitude, and their admiration. It was a long, living funeral procession from Lahore nearly to Umritsur.

Robert Napier, now Lord Napier of Magdala, was the last to tear himself away from one who was dearer to him than a brother. 'Kiss him,' said Henry Lawrence to his sister, as Napier turned back, at last, heart-broken towards Lahore. 'Kiss him, he is my best and dearest friend.' When he reached Umritsur, at the house of Charles Saunders, the Deputy-Commissioner, a new group of mourners and a fresh outburst of grief awaited him; and thence he passed on into Rajpootana, 'dented all over,' to use his friend Herbert Edwardes' words, 'with defeats and disapprovals, honourable scars in the eyes of the bystanders.' They were honourable, indeed, because they were all of them received, in accordance with his own chivalrous character, 'in defence of those who were down.'

'To know Sir Henry was to love him,' says one of his friends. 'No man ever dined at Sir Henry's table without learning from him to think more kindly of the natives,' says another. 'His character was far above his career, distinguished as that career was,' said Lord Stanley. 'There is not, I am sure,' said Lord Canning, when the disastrous news of his soldier's death at Lucknow thrilled throughout England and India, 'any Englishman in India who does not regard the loss of Sir Henry Lawrence as one of the heaviest of public calamities. There is not, I believe, a native of the provinces where he has held authority who will not remember his name as that of a friend and generous benefactor to the races of India.'

It has been my duty, in the course of this narrative, to point out some of the specialities in his training and his character which, in my judgment, rendered him less eligible than his younger brother for the post of Chief Commissioner of the Punjab. It is, therefore, all the more incumbent upon me to say that, having studied large portions of his unpublished correspondence, and having conversed with most of his surviving friends and relations, some of them followers and admirers of the younger rather than of the elder brother, it is my deliberate conviction that, take him all in all, his moral as well as his intellectual qualities, no Englishman who has been in India has ever influenced other men so much for good; nobody has ever done so much towards bridging over the gulf that separates race from race, colour from colour, and creed from creed; nobody has ever been so beloved, nobody has ever deserved to be so beloved, as Sir Henry Lawrence.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF THE PUNJAB. 1852–1853.

THE departure of Sir Henry Lawrence from the Punjab, if it gave an immediate feeling of relief from an intolerable tension, was also a cause of sore distress of mind to the brother who had been working with him under such strained relations, but with such truly brotherly affection. How painful and how distressing the whole circumstances had been to him, his innermost circle of friends and relations alone knew fully. But it may also be inferred from the whole course of the preceding narrative. To have worked as he had done for and with his brother, often at the expense of his personal inclinations, of his health, of his family life for years past, ever since, in fact, our connection with the Punjab had begun, and then to have been driven at last to take the place which that brother might have been expected, and had himself expected, to fill; to feel that some of the best officers in the Punjab, men who had been attracted thither by Henry, and regarded him with enthusiastic affection, were looking askance at him, perhaps, attributing to him unworthy acts or unworthy motives, and, perhaps, also, preparing, like Nicholson, to leave him in the lurch and follow the fortunes of their old master; to feel that the iron had entered so deeply into his brother's soul as to make it doubtful whether he would ever care to see him again, or to be addressed by the old familiar name of 'Hal,'[1]—all this must have been distressing enough, and, for the time at all events, must have thrown the other feeling of relief into the background.

In reply to a touching letter which his brother had written to him on the eve of his departure, begging him to treat the dispossessed chiefs kindly, 'because they were down,' and wishing him all success in his new post, John Lawrence replied as follows:—

[1] His letters to his brother after this period always begin, 'My dear Henry.

My dear Henry,—I have received your kind note, and can only say in reply that I sincerely wish that you had been left in the Punjab to carry out your own views, and that I had got another berth. I must further say that where I have opposed your views I have done it from a thorough conviction, and not from factious or interested motives. I will give every man a fair hearing, and will endeavour to give every man his due. More than this no one should expect. . . . It is more than probable that you and I will never again meet; but I trust that all unkindly feeling between us may be forgotten.

Yours affectionately,
JOHN LAWRENCE.

It was a melancholy beginning for the Chief Commissionership—a post inferior in importance to few in India, and one which Sir Charles Napier had himself said he would prefer to the command-in-chief of the Indian army. But, once more, it may be observed that it was to the advantage of the State, not less than of the brothers themselves, that the change had, at last, been made. Henry Lawrence had bridged over the interval between the native and the English systems, had eased the fall of the privileged classes, had attracted the affections of all ranks to himself, and so, in a measure, to the new Government, in a way in which John by himself could certainly not have done. The work of pacification—Henry's proper work—was over. The foundation of the new edifice had been laid, in much tribulation, perhaps, but by a happy compromise between the extremer views of the two brothers. It now remained to build upon the foundation which had been laid, to develop, to organise, to consolidate. This could be better done by one man than by three; and the warmest admirers of Henry will admit that, when the crisis came four years later, it was well for England and well for India that there were then, and that there had been for those four preceding years, no divided counsels in the Punjab. It was well that there was one clear head, one firm will, one strong hand, to which anybody and everybody could look, and which would be free to judge, to issue orders and to strike, on its own undivided responsibility.

The work of John Lawrence was, as I have already pointed out, to be, in the main, one of development—of progress, that is, within lines which had been, to a great extent, laid down. It is unnecessary, therefore, to treat the four years of peaceful rule which follow with the particularity of detail with which it seemed desirable to describe the virgin soil and the new fields of enterprise and activity which opened out before the Board. The questions which confronted John

Lawrence, as Chief Commissioner, were much the same as those with which he had to deal as one of the triumvirate. There was the same difficult mountain frontier to defend; the same turbulent and faithless tribes to civilise, to conciliate, or to coerce; the same deeply rooted social evils, which had, as yet, been scotched only, not killed, to grapple with. There was the same standing question—which can hardly be said to have been solved even now—of how a revenue may best be raised from the land, which should not unduly depress the cultivator, and yet leave a margin for those grand material and social improvements which had been set on foot. Finally, there were the same diversities of character and temper in the staff of able assistants who had flocked to the Punjab, as to the crack regiment of the service, from all parts of India, to be studied and humoured, stimulated, reconciled, or controlled.

It would be easy with the help of the six folio volumes of letters written by Lord Lawrence during this period, and which, of course, I have myself carefully studied throughout, to show in detail how he dealt with each of these and a hundred other difficulties as they arose. But it would require at least a folio volume so to do, and it would in my judgment, both here and in the case of his Viceroyalty, defeat the primary object which a biographer ought to keep in view throughout —the bringing before his readers, in the boldest possible outlines, the central figure. In such a folio volume, the man would almost necessarily be lost in the details, very often in the driest and most mechanical details, of his work. If it revealed to us everything that he did, it would be at the cost of not knowing much of what he was. I do not, therefore, propose to describe, in order of time or in minute detail, the steps by which each wild tribe that crossed our frontier was repelled and punished, and sometimes gradually drawn towards a quiet life; but rather to show what that general scheme of frontier policy was, which has been so much attacked and so much misrepresented, but which will always, as I think, be most honourably connected with Lord Lawrence's name—a policy which has ensured the safety of India, has husbanded her resources, has respected the rights of weaker and more barbarous races, and has imposed a salutary check on the aggressive tendencies which are always natural, and not always to be severely condemned, in the military leaders of an energetic and expansive race. Neither do I propose to give minute statistics, such as may be found in the Punjab Reports, of the rise and fall of the Revenue or of the increase or diminution of crime, or

to explain how this or that misconception in the mind of a subordinate against a brother officer, or against his chief, was removed by an infinite expenditure of tact and patience on the part of that chief; but rather to point out how he impressed his own strong personality, his own single-minded devotion to the public service, on the whole body of his subordinates; how he got rid of the incompetent, how he stimulated the slow, how he doubled the energies even of the most energetic. It is by such a sketch as this, rather than by a detailed history of his administration, that I hope I shall be able to make clear to others, within the limits of two or three chapters, what I think I have at least made clear to myself by long and laborious study—how it was that, when the crisis came, John Lawrence, with the help of the men whom he had gathered and had managed to keep around him, proved equal to the emergency; and how it was that, in the Punjab and outside of it, everybody alike, his enemies as well as his friends, the natives as well as the Europeans, felt that nothing could well go wrong so long as he was at the helm.

On the final abolition of the Board, in February 1853, John Lawrence was gazetted 'Chief Commissioner of the Punjab.' He alone was to be responsible to the Supreme Government for carrying out its orders. He was to be the head of the executive in all its branches, to take charge of the political relations with the adjoining states, to have the general control of the frontier force, of the Guide corps, of the military police, and of the Civil Engineer's department. Under him there were to be two 'Principal Commissioners,' the one the head of the Judicial, the other of the Financial departments of the State. The division of labour for which, as a member of the Board, he had so often and so earnestly pleaded, was thus carried out under the most favourable auspices. Each of the two officers under him was to have sole control over his own department instead of a divided joint control over all. In this manner, his attention was concentrated and his individual responsibility fixed, while uniformity of design and of practice was secured by the appointment of a single head.

The two men selected to fill the posts next to John Lawrence in dignity were, both of them, men after his own heart. Montgomery, of course, was one of them. He became Judicial Commissioner, and, as such, he was not merely to be the chief judge of appeal and assize, but was to discharge many purely executive functions, to superintend the roads, to be the head of the police, to have the control of the local and municipal funds, and to be responsible for

the execution of miscellaneous improvements, especially for the progress of education. The Financial duties fell to George Edmonstone, who had just filled the difficult and complicated post of Commissioner in the Cis-Sutlej States, and whose contemplated return to England had filled John Lawrence with anxiety only a few weeks before. Everything now went smoothly enough. Arrears of all kinds were rapidly cleared off. Those officers who had threatened, in their vexation, to leave the Punjab, did not carry out their threat, and few of them ever talked again of doing so. Those who were away on furlough and who said, in their vexation, that they would never return to it, now that it had lost Henry Lawrence, were glad enough to do so, when they found how much of what was best in Henry Lawrence's administration was also to be found in John's. Nicholson, in particular, whose presence among the wild tribes of Bunnoo John Lawrence pronounced, a few months later, to be 'well worth the wing of a regiment,' in spite of the hasty resolve which I have just mentioned, and in spite also of many misunderstandings which were rendered inevitable by his masterful spirit and ungovernable temper, was induced or enabled by the unvarying tact and temper of his chief to remain at his post even till the Mutiny broke out. A few sentences from the first letter which John Lawrence wrote to him—the first letter which he wrote to any one after he became Chief Commissioner—may, in view of the romantic interest attaching to the recipient and the characteristic mixture of frankness and friendliness on the writer's part, fitly find a place here.

Lahore: January 22.

My dear Nicholson,— . . . You have lost a good friend in my brother, but I hope to prove just as staunch a one to you. I set a great value on your zeal, energy, and administrative powers, though I may sometimes think you have a good deal to learn. You may rest assured of my support and good-will in all your labours. You may depend on it that order, rule, and law are good in the hands of those who can understand them, and who know how to apply their knowledge. They increase tenfold the power of work in an able man, while, without them, ordinary men can do but little. I hope you will try and assess all the rent of Bunnoo this cold weather. It will save you much future trouble. Assess low, leaving fair and liberal margin to the occupiers of the soil, and they will increase their cultivation and put the revenue almost beyond the reach of bad seasons. Eschew middle-men. They are the curse of the country everywhere. The land must pay the revenue and feed them, as well as support the occupiers.

With a light assessment, equally distributed over the village lands, half your labour will cease, and you will have full time to devote to police arrangements.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN LAWRENCE.

How well the promise that he would support Nicholson in all his labours was kept, is evidenced by some hundreds of letters which passed between the two men, and by the whole of their subsequent history. James Abbott, indeed, did leave the Punjab, to the relief, perhaps, of his immediate superiors—Mackeson and Lord Dalhousie, who had found him somewhat impracticable and wayward—but to the deep regret of the wild inhabitants of Huzara, who regarded him as a father, and with the warm appreciation of what was good and great in him (and there was very much that was both good and great in him) on the part of John Lawrence. 'He is a right good fellow,' said the Chief Commissioner, 'with ability of a high order.' It should be added that his departure had been arranged for before the abolition of the Board, and was in no way due to the change of masters. Herbert Edwardes succeeded him in Huzara, the halfway house, as John Lawrence pointed out, to the much more important post of Peshawur—a post which he was pre-eminently the man 'to have and to hold' during the troublous times that were drawing near. Hodson, who had once been a friend of Henry Lawrence, a man of great courage and energy, but with a moral twist which was to lead him all awry, succeeded to the command of the Guides in place of Harry Lumsden, who had gone home on furlough. Hathaway became Inspector of Prisons; Raikes filled the Commissionership of Lahore, vacated by Barnes, while Barnes went to the Cis-Sutlej States to take the place of Edmonstone. These were the only changes of importance in the early days of the Chief Commissionership; and thus, though there was some shifting of the parts, the actors in the great drama, with one important exception, remained the same. It was a new act, or a new scene; but the play was an old one, and the plot remained unbroken throughout.

It may also be remarked here, that, when once the spirit of mutual antagonism had been removed by the removal of his brother, John Lawrence's policy in the matter of jagheers and rent-free tenures began to gravitate slightly, but sensibly, towards that of Henry. Perhaps the last moving appeal of Henry Lawrence on behalf of 'those who were down' had touched a chord in his heart of the

existence of which he may have been hardly conscious before. But, in any case, the recommendations on the subject of such tenures—some sixty or seventy thousand of which had not yet been considered—which were made by him, as Chief Commissioner, tended to be more liberal in their character than any which he had ever sanctioned as member of the Board. So liberal were they, that they were often disallowed by Government, and, at last, drew down a letter of rebuke from Lord Dalhousie himself, who appealed from the John Lawrence of the present to the John Lawrence of former days. It must have been one drop of comfort in Henry Lawrence's bitter cup, if he realised that it was so.

In personal character, too, I think I am not wrong in saying that John Lawrence bore, henceforward, a greater and a constantly increasing resemblance to his brother. Without losing a particle of his energy, his independence, his zeal, he did lose, henceforward, something of his roughness, something of that which an outsider, or an opponent, might have put down as hard or harsh. 'The two Lawrences,' says one who knew them intimately and appreciated them equally, General Reynell Taylor, 'were really very much alike in character. They each had their own capabilities and virtues, and when one of them was removed from the scene, the *frater superstes* succeeded to many of the graces of his lost brother.' In this sense it is, I believe, true that the influence of Henry Lawrence was greater on his brother, and was even more felt throughout the Punjab Administration when he had left the country for ever, than while he was living and working within it; just as the words, the looks, the memory of the dead have often a more living influence on the survivors than had all the charms of their personal presence. The memorable words, 'If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me,' are true, not in their literal and their original sense alone. They give expression to a great fact of human nature, which—as He who uttered them would, we may believe, have been the first to point out—are true, in their measure, of all His followers, and, most of all, of those who follow Him most closely.

Throughout his future career, when any particularly knotty question came up, John Lawrence would ask himself as one—and that not the least important—element for his consideration how his brother Henry would have acted under the circumstances. 'My brother Henry used to say so-and-so,' were words which those who knew him best have told me came very frequently to his lips; and only a

few months before his death, when he had just decided to throw himself into the breach, in the hope that he might still stop the iniquity of the Afghan war, 'I believe,' he said pathetically to Mrs. Hart, the only daughter of Sir Henry Lawrence—'I believe your father would have agreed with me in what I am doing now.'

As to his own feelings, now that he was able to stand on his own foundation, and to get through double the amount of work with less than half the former amount of worry, John Lawrence writes thus to the Governor-General :—

> I am infinitely indebted for the kind and handsome manner in which my new post has been conferred. The manner in which the favour has been granted has added greatly to its value. I only trust that I may prove worthy of the distinction. . . . Whatever may be the result of the new system, I must say that I feel no fears or misgivings on that account. I have with me some of the very best men whom the Civil Service can produce, as Commissioners. If any incentive to exertion was wanted, which I feel there is not, it is that the honour of the whole Civil Service is, to a large extent, in my hands. I desire earnestly to show what a man bred and educated as a civilian can do in a new country.

To his friend Raikes he writes in similar terms. 'We are getting on swimmingly. The peace and comfort of the new arrangements are almost too much for one's good. I scarcely think that I deserve to be so comfortable.' It was not that he had more leisure, for, as he tells one correspondent, 'his pen was hardly ever out of his hand;' and he begs another never to cross his letters, for he was 'almost blind with reading manuscript.' It is the first indication that I have been able to find of the calamity which was ultimately to overtake him. Of course, there were plenty of troubles to come, but divided counsels and arrears of work were seldom to be among them. In one very sanguine moment, indeed, he expresses his expectation that, under the new system, his work will be reduced one-half, and that he will, for the future, be able to have more of the luxury of thought. But this was not a hope destined to be realised, nor would he have been a happier man if it had been.

To get the pay of the Punjab officers raised to an equality with those of other parts of India, and so to remove a standing grievance, from which they, if any officers in India, deserved to be free; to instruct—personally to instruct, as though he had been their immediate superior—young and raw civilians in the routine of their duties, and so to bring his personal influence to bear upon them from the very

beginning of their career; to induce men who, like Nicholson or Mackeson or Hodson, were essentially men of action, to become—what was much more difficult and still more essential for good government—men of business also, and to keep and send in the reports of their administration punctually; to induce men who, like Nicholson again, or Edwardes or James, were, before all things, soldiers, and whose notions of justice were essentially military notions—a short shrift or a quick delivery—to adhere rigidly to the forms of justice: to take care, for instance, that even when a murderer was caught red-handed on the Trans-Indus frontier he should be confronted with witnesses, should be allowed to summon them for himself, and to have the charge, the evidence, and the sentence carefully put on record; to induce men who, like Nicholson once more, must have been conscious of their unique powers of command and of their superior military ability, to be ready always to consult and to obey their superior in military rank; to persuade energetic military politicals, like Coke, who were always burning to take part in military operations which were going on, perhaps, some fifty miles from their civil station, that the chief test of a good officer was his willingness always to remain at his post; to keep the Engineers, with Robert Napier at their head, within bounds in carrying out their magnificent works, and to convince them—though in this not even he, much less any one else, could have succeeded—that one of the most necessary parts of their public duties was a strict and punctual preparation of their accounts; to correspond at great length, and with infinite tact, with his friend Courtenay, Private Secretary to the Governor-General, on important and embarrassing questions of State, for which he had gradually to prepare the 'Lord Sahib's' mind, and then put them before him for decision, in the fitting manner and at the fitting time and place; to bring before the Governor-General himself, with judicial impartiality, the conflicting claims of every candidate for every important post in the Punjab; to induce him, at whatever cost, to remove an incompetent, an unwilling, or an unworthy officer, on the principle on which he himself had always acted, that it was better that one man should die for the people than that a whole people should die for one man; to suggest to overworked and over-willing men, like John Becher, the necessity—a necessity which John Lawrence certainly never recognised in his own case—of sparing themselves, and to point out the precise methods by which they could best do so; to help those who like Donald Macleod, with the best

intentions and the highest ability, were yet, owing to unconquerable idiosyncrasies, always hopelessly in arrears, by actually himself going through hundreds of their papers and clearing them off; to protect the natives generally, particularly the native soldiers, from all ill-treatment, whether of a blow, a word, or a contemptuous gesture from officers who occasionally, even in the Punjab, dared to forget that difference of colour or of race implied only an increase of moral responsibility; to order or counter-order, or keep within the limits of justice and of moderation, the retaliatory expeditions which the raids of the wild tribes upon our frontier, after long forbearance on our part, often rendered inevitable; to keep down, in view of the paramount necessity, in so poor a country, for economy, the demands for additional assistants which crowded upon him from the Commissioners and Deputy-Commissioners as they found their work growing under their hands; to decline civilly, but decidedly, the request of wives for their husbands, or of mothers for their sons, that he would give them appointments for which they were not competent; to inculcate upon his subordinates his own salutary horror of jobs of every degree and every description, and to keep them as far as possible—as he had always kept himself till his health had broken down and the doctors told him that a change in his habits was essential to his stay in India—from gravitating, if I may so say, towards the hills, those delectable temptations, as he regarded them, to the neglect of work and duty;—these were some of the subjects, perhaps, a tithe of the whole, with which the correspondence of the first few months shows he had to deal; and they form, I think, a fair sample of his whole work and responsibilities as Chief Commissioner.

His correspondence with Lord Dalhousie and with John Nicholson would each fill a volume, and a volume replete with historical as well as biographical interest. That with Lord Dalhousie gives, perhaps, a higher idea, as a whole, than any other of his loyalty and his manly frankness, of his insight and his statesmanlike breadth of view; that with Nicholson, of his prudence and his patience, of his forbearance and his magnanimity—in a word, of his determination, cost him what it might, to retain in the Punjab a man whom, stiff-necked and masterful as he was, he recognised as a commanding genius, and as a single-hearted and devoted public servant. The one set of letters shows John Lawrence's readiness to obey, the other his claims to command. The one gives the most convincing testimony to the powers of his head, the other to the still more sterling qualities of his heart.

It is difficult, by any mere selection from John Lawrence's correspondence, to give an adequate idea of the way in which he dealt with such questions as I have enumerated; and I have therefore put into the first place the judgment which I have myself been led to form from a minute study of them as a whole. I proceed, however, to give a few extracts which, if they do not go very far, go at least some way towards justifying and illustrating what I have said.

A rather inexperienced, but energetic and promising, civilian, named Simson, had been thrown suddenly on a district which had been sadly neglected by his predecessor; and, finding himself in great difficulties, frequently applied direct to the Chief Commissioner for help. The Chief Commissioner thus responded :—

Work away as hard as you can, and get all things into order. If you succeed, you will establish a claim to early promotion which cannot be overlooked, and which, as far as I go, shall not be passed over. I made my fortune, I consider, by being placed, in 1834, in a district in a state similar to Leia, in which I worked for two years, morning, noon, and night, and, after all, was superseded! Nevertheless, all my prosperity dates from that time. Your charge of Leia will prove a similar one in your career. . . . I would throw my strength into putting things straight for the future, and leave off complaints of the past, as much as possible, weeding out bad officials, and making an example in a summary but legal way here and there. . . . Without being too formal and technical, put on record all that occurs, and be careful that you act in accordance with law and justice. . . . You may give such reductions as you may consider fair and reasonable. Don't give it merely because people scream, but where it is necessary. Better give a little too much than too little; it will be true economy in the end.

Nicholson, Simson's neighbour at Bunnoo, was not disposed to take his complaints and difficulties in quite such good part, and wrote to the Chief Commissioner to that effect. The Chief Commissioner's answer was to the point. 'Simson is doubtless a bit of a screamer; but the people scream even louder than he does against the bad system that has prevailed there.'

The very high opinion which John Lawrence had formed of Nicholson from the earliest times, and retained to the end, in spite of frequent trials of strength, will come out abundantly in the sequel. But the following will give some idea of one of the many difficulties which he had in dealing with him.

I consent to an expedition against the Sheoranis, who have lately

burnt and plundered one of our villages. I wish, however, that the Brigadier (Hodgson) should approve and concur in the necessity of the expedition, and that either he or Fitzgerald should command. I do not wish that either you or Coke should go into the hills unless no other equally efficient officer is available. As district officers, it is desirable that you both remain in your district; most mischievous results might ensue if either of you were killed or wounded; for the whole of the administration would be hampered.

A thoroughly characteristic remark this, and one which the recipient may, very possibly, at the time, have not altogether appreciated! A man is seldom able to contemplate his own wounds or death simply from the point of view in which they may affect the government of the day, and he may, not unnaturally, resent the head of that government appearing to do so either. But it was John Lawrence's way always to put public considerations in the front, leaving private considerations, as they are generally able to do, to assert themselves; and could Nicholson have seen the terms in which this apparently uncompromising disciplinarian was, even then, writing to Lord Dalhousie [1] and others about his vast capacities and his intrinsic worth, still more, could he have foreseen the strong personal regard, nay the enthusiastic admiration, which, years afterwards, when the news came—the news of a lifetime—that Delhi had fallen, threw all joy into the background, and forced tears from the eyes of his chief, because, with the news of victory, came, also, the news that he was dead,—he would have been able to read between the lines of this and similar letters, and would, perchance, have loved the man almost as much as he admired the ruler.

Nicholson's answer on this occasion does not seem to have removed the misgivings of his chief, that he might be induced, by a little extra provocation, to go on an expedition on his own account; and John Lawrence writes to him again, thus:—

I shall be very glad if you punish the Sheoranis, but get Hodgson to agree in your measures. Don't think that I wish you to go into the hills with too small a force; on no account risk anything in this way. . . . Pray report officially all incursions. I shall get into trouble if you don't.

[1] *E.g.* on August 31, 1853: 'I look on Major Nicholson as the best district officer on the frontier. He possesses great courage, much force of character, and is, at the same time, shrewd and intelligent. He is well worth the wing of a regiment on the border; for his *prestige* with the people, both on the hills and plains, is very great. He is also a very fair civil officer, and has done a good deal to put things straight in his district.'

The Governor-General insists on knowing all that goes on, and not unreasonably; but I can't tell him this if I don't hear details.

A few days later, the danger still seemed imminent.

If you must go into the hills, by all means try and have the Brigadier in favour of it. It will *not* do to go against his opinion. Be he what he may as Brigadier, his opposition would be fatal if aught went wrong; so pray try and have him in favour of the scheme, and don't go without his consent. Even success would not justify your doing it. If he thinks you should have more troops, get him to apply to Mooltan for a corps, and say I authorise his doing so. Don't suppose that I fear the responsibility of allowing you to go into the hills. I shall willingly take on myself that responsibility, but it seems essential that the Brigadier who commands on the frontier should be in favour of the measure. Government gave the Board, and has given me, the power to authorise offensive measures when absolutely necessary; but they would not support us if aught went wrong and we had set aside the Brigadier's opinions; so pray recollect this.

Well might Lord Dalhousie write, 'I know that Nicholson is a first-rate guerilla leader; but I don't want a guerilla policy.' A guerilla policy it is likely enough there would have been, all along the five hundred miles of frontier, under such provocation as our frontier officers were constantly receiving, had there been a less powerful and, at the same time, a less patient ruler than John Lawrence at the helm. It need only be added that the expedition did come off at last, that it was confined within reasonable limits, that it effected its purpose, and, thanks to John Lawrence's efforts, caused no breach between the Brigadier and his impetuous subordinate.

Robert Napier, with his magnificent ideas and his regardlessness of expense, was a help and a difficulty of a somewhat similar kind. Everything he did was well—probably it could not have been better—done. Like Nicholson, he had come into the Punjab under the auspices of Henry Lawrence; and when John, 'the member of the Board,' as he described himself, 'who was for economy, even to frugality,' succeeded to his brother's place, it was inevitable that there should be some friendly passages of arms between them. Napier, conscious, no doubt, of his great powers, and as fond of work almost as John himself, wished—as it was only natural that he should—that as many public works as possible should be started and completed in the best possible way and in the shortest possible time. The Chief Commissioner, who was responsible for the well-being of the

province as a whole, and therefore for its solvency, was compelled to put the drag on ; to ask that no new works should be begun before the old were completed ; that all new works should be duly authorised ; and, above all, that progress-reports and accounts should be sent in as regularly as possible. I am bound to say that in this he only very partially succeeded, and, perhaps, it was not altogether bad for the State that it was so. The pressure he put upon Napier was by no means entirely voluntary on his part. It is amusing, in the mass of correspondence before me, to note how the Directors were continually putting economical pressure on Lord Dalhousie, which he handed on to John Lawrence, which he, knowing his man, handed on with interest to Napier, which he, also knowing his men, after a good deal of passive resistance, and probably with large reductions, handed on, in turn, to his subordinates. It was the case of the water which would not quench the fire, and the fire which would not burn the rope, and the rope which would not hang the man !

Napier's subordinates—Alexander Taylor, for instance, who was in charge of the Peshawur Road, and has described the state of things to me—were employed, every day and all day, on the great works on which they were engaged, and had no time, or fancied they had none, to send in elaborate reports to their chief, which he might then have transmitted to John Lawrence in good time for their publication in the biennial 'Punjab Reports,' or for the quieting of the financial anxieties of the Governor-General. The Engineers were thus a constant, if an involuntary, source of trouble to the Chief Commissioner, who used to tell them humorously that they 'could not open their mouths without taking in a lac of rupees.' But, as I have said, the system did not work so badly for the State, and it certainly did not affect the respect and regard of John Lawrence for Napier. It was at John Lawrence's earnest request, as well as by the Governor-General's own sense of the fitness of things, that Napier was appointed Chief Engineer of the Punjab in 1854. 'I am very glad,' said John Lawrence on May 6, 1854, 'that the Governor-General has given Napier the Chief Engineership. He is a fine fellow, and there cannot be a question that he is the man who should get it. The work he has done since annexation is enormous, and would have killed many men.' And, years afterwards, when the Abyssinian war was in prospect, and John Lawrence was asked whom he would send as Commander-in-Chief, 'So-and-so would do,' he said, 'pretty well; but if you want the thing thoroughly well done'—and he doubtless

thought, as he spoke, of the Grand Trunk Road and the Bari Doab Canal—'go to Napier.'

A few more extracts from John Lawrence's letters during the first year of his Chief Commissionership will give some idea of the way in which he rebuked the wrong-doer, helped the willing or the ill-instructed, tried to keep down extravagance, and got rid of inefficient officers.

To Captain Coke, an officer of much energy and ability, but rather new to civil work, and then in charge of Kohat, he writes on March 20, 1853 :—

You must not be annoyed at not being allowed to go with your regiment to a distance from Kohat. It is very natural, and very soldier-like, that you should wish to do it. But it is my duty to look to the public weal, and this requires that you should be at Kohat, above all things, at the time when it has been weakened by the absence of a portion of its force. I look on it that the absence of the district officer from Kohat or Bunnoo is equal to the absence of an extra wing of infantry. Besides, in your absence, how is the civil work to be carried on? If you are killed or wounded, who is to supply your place? . . . Take my advice: get a copy of the 'Accountant's Manual,' and study it for half an hour a week, and get a general idea of its contents. Afterwards, when anything bothers you, turn to the Manual, or make your clerk do so, and in three months you will get your office into order, and in six months you will be as *au fait* at all these matters as Mr. Grant himself. Unless you do this, you will always be in trouble, and, some day, be put down as incompetent. If you are to be a civil officer you must master civil details. Don't be annoyed at my plain mode of dealing with the matter. It is the best way to put the thing right. You must serve an apprenticeship in these things. Don't let Mackeson rest until he passes, or gets passed, all your bills. I will help you; but I can only do so thoroughly when you come up in an official form. . . . . I am ready to help you by showing you how to go about things. It is a pity that your Commissioner does not do this himself.

To Captain ——, on March 21, he writes :—

I think it right to tell you that I hear the Sirdars of your district express a good deal of discontent with your administration. I understand they complain much of your spies, informers, and *omlah* (native staff). I beg you will look to this. We should all try to do our duty without giving cause of offence. There is no machinery so difficult to manage as that of espionage.

On July 17, he writes to Nicholson :—

681 rupees per mensem is, doubtless, no great thing in itself, but it is not a solitary case. Our pensions and pay have eaten up the larger portion of the revenues of the Punjab already, and there is seldom a day that more claims don't come up. The consequence is that good and useful projects are refused or stinted for finance considerations. You may, perhaps, not care for such considerations, like many other of our friends; but I am bound to do so. Sooner or later that consideration predominates over all others.

I see the poor Court of Directors has gone smash because we chucked away fifteen millions in the Afghan war, and could not afford the material improvements India required. Don't send up any more men to be hanged direct, unless the case is very urgent; and when you do, send an abstract of the evidence in English, and send it through the Commissioner.

Here is one of many letters which touch on a subject on which he felt very strongly—the proper treatment of the natives by English officers. There had been serious discontent, approaching to mutiny, in the Third Sikh Local Infantry in Huzara; an inquiry showed that, if the men were somewhat to blame, the commanding officer was much more so. Accordingly, John Lawrence writes thus to Lord Dalhousie:—

Captain —— did not succeed to an easy charge; certainly not to such an orderly and well-disciplined corps as the First Infantry Locals. But it appears evident to me that he has not the qualities which fit an officer for so important and delicate a trust as the command of an Irregular Corps. It is notorious that some of our European officers cannot speak civilly to a native of India. They cannot restrain themselves from giving vent to gross abuse, when in any way excited, if the party has a black face. Captain —— seems to be one of this class. Edwardes, in his private note, admits that 'he slangs the men dreadfully.' Is it likely that he habitually thus addressed the men, and was more considerate with the native officers? The natives of all classes, though they may not show it, are particularly sensitive on this point. A kindly free manner, a soft tone, a general accessibility in their superiors, are the qualities which win their attachment, perhaps even more than impartiality and a high sense of honour.

One of the great advantages of the present system of officering irregular corps is the facility which exists of getting rid of incapable officers by sending them back to their own regiments. I strongly recommend that this be done to Captain ——. It is impossible to place any confidence in his judgment, temper, or firmness.

He recurs to the same subject in a letter to Lord Dalhousie's private secretary:—

You will see what I say of the Third Sikhs. It will not be necessary to disband them. Get rid of the *mufsids* (mischievous fellows), and send —— to his corps and put a real soldier in his room, and all will come straight. There are good soldiers in the Company's army, and while they are to be had, such a man as —— should never have been selected. I fear you will think me an iron-hearted fellow; but when I see the evils which arise from using incompetent tools, I think we cannot be too careful—first, in our selections, and secondly, in getting rid of any man who proves that he is unfit for his work. However careful we may be, some mistakes must be made. The sooner they are corrected, the better. Mercy to individuals is cruelty to the mass and ruination to the public service. I think if —— is not removed it will be a grave mistake. I have no idea of flooring the native officers and sparing the English ones. One would think that the former got all the honour and glory, and the European officers nothing, for directly there comes a rumpus, all blame is thrown upon the natives.

It only remains to be added that the Chief Commissioner's remonstrances were successful, and that the regiment, placed under a new commanding officer, was reported, within a few months, as being in excellent order, and as having volunteered for service wherever they might be required, in any quarter of the world.

The taking of a bribe by a British officer has, happily, been a rare occurrence in the history of British India, but one such case actually occurred in the Punjab. The following is written to the culprit:

July 16, 1853.

I received your note of the 14th, and regret I am unable to give it any other public answer than I have done. I really do not know what to recommend, and yet I do not like to say nothing to help you. It strikes me that the simplest course is for you to write to Mr. J. P. Grant, and throw yourself on the Governor-General's mercy; admit that you were a fool and a madman, and say you are ready to suffer the penalty of your fault. I see not that you can do otherwise to any advantage.

This is a very sad business. I mean not to reproach you in your affliction, but, in the whole course of my service, I never knew a case where a civilian gave or received a bribe. Why did you not write and ask me about your promotion?

It is useless my trying to help you. There is no remedy for the error you have committed other than to bear the penalty and express your contrition.

To his great friend, John Becher of the Engineers, who had only just taken to civil work, he writes in a strain which is so unlike his

usual one, bidding him not to do more, but to be content with less work, that I quote a sentence or two from it :—

Umritsur: April 22, 1853.

I had the pleasure to receive yours of the 20th. I should have rejoiced to have seen you, as we passed through, but I understand and appreciate your motives in not coming. I am afraid you have a weary life of it at Buttala, and that the work presses heavily on you. . . . Don't overdo the thing; don't work too hard. Divide your work, and make all do their share.

Becher was, in time, transferred to Huzara, and proved a worthy successor there of James Abbott and of Herbert Edwardes. He was still much oppressed by his work, and, knowing alike his willingness and his ability, his chief writes in much the same strain, hoping to suggest a remedy. His incidental remarks on his own powers of work are of biographical interest.

March 16, 1854.

I cannot understand how two men cannot do the Huzara work with ease. I know you work hard; perhaps, more so than is necessary; certainly, more than is good for you; but I cannot understand how it happens that you do not make more way. So far from marching about delaying my work, I have always found it was the best time for getting through anything like arrears. When I was a district officer, I was, at least, six months of the year under canvas, and found that I got through everything and had time for everything. I made settlements, decided boundaries, got over *maafi* (rent-free holdings) and *foujdari* (magisterial cases). I suspect that you want confidence in yourself, and, though you are always grinding, that you procrastinate when you come to the actual decision. Abbott may have left you arrears which I wot not of, or it may be that Pearce does not take his share. There must be a hitch somewhere. Huzara is a mountainous country, thinly peopled, with little commerce. How there can be much work in such a place passes my comprehension.

I have been literally, but truly, on the move ever since the end of August, and my office was never in better order than at present. I do not write this to glorify myself or to underrate your labours, but that you may turn the matter over in your mind, and discover where the mistake lies. Nicholson is here. He is a first-rate 'warden of the marches.' The district is in capital order.

To complete this account of John Lawrence's treatment of his subordinates during the earlier part of his Chief Commissionership, I subjoin here a trenchant but kindly criticism of the man whom perhaps he loved more than any man living—one who was soon to be in close connection with him as 'Financial Commissioner' in

Edmonstone's place, was to work on with him in perfect harmony throughout the Mutiny, and afterwards, when he was Viceroy, was to be recommended by him for the Lieutenant-Governorship of the Punjab itself—the late Sir Donald Macleod. John Lawrence loved him for his goodness, and, when he was already overwhelmed with work, would gladly take over any number of his papers, and go through them himself. The description is lifelike, and by no one would it have been more enjoyed, or its truthfulness more readily acknowledged, than by Macleod himself.

August 1, 1853.

Dear Edwardes,—I have known Donald Macleod for twenty-five years, and appreciate his real worth and merit as much as any man can do. Morally and intellectually, he has no superior in the Punjab, perhaps no equal. But, as an administrator, he is behind Edmonstone, Raikes, and even Barnes. He is too fond of polishing, and his execution is not equal to his designs. He wastes much time on unimportant matters. He spends as much time on a petty case as on an important one. His Commissionership has not fair and honest work for a man of ability and knowledge for six hours a day. I know it, for I was Commissioner there for three years when it had to be licked into shape. It is useless saying that we must choose between quality and quantity. We must have both, or the result is a failure. There are certain things to be done in an official berth, and a certain time to do them in. A good and efficient administrator will so distribute his time as to do them all. He will economise when it can be done safely, and throw in his power when it is wanted. Edmonstone has not the intellect of Donald; he has not his knowledge of the customs and habits of the people; but by order and economy of time, joined to an iron constitution, he did treble the work that Donald does; and, on the whole, he did it better. He would not do a given case so well, perhaps, but he would do a hundred, while the other would do ten, and he would do them rightly. Donald spends half the day writing elegant demi-official chits. I spin off a dozen in a day, and they don't take an hour. They may want the elegant turn he gives to his, but they are to the point and do all that is necessary. Edmonstone, Raikes, and Barnes have more settlements than Macleod. The revenues of the country cannot afford more men. We must either reduce the salaries, and thus effect a saving to pay for more men, or we must get more work out of our Donalds. An assistant is of little or no use to a really efficient Commissioner. The mere drudgery of the office should be done by the head clerk, who gets the pay of an educated man. No practical man would have kept such a man as —— for his head clerk for a month. Donald *moans*, but retains him. At this moment, he has not sent up any report of his administration for the past three years, and has several hundred

appeals standing over, some as long as four years. He has men under *trial* in jail for upwards of a year. '*Bis dat qui cito dat*' is a good motto in administration.' Donald is not fit for a new country; he has, with all his virtues, radical defects. I see this, who love the man; what more can I say?

The only events in the Punjab or its dependencies which involved any possible political complications during the first year or two of John Lawrence's Chief Commissionership, were a contest for the succession in the adjoining State of Bahawulpore, and the murder of Mackeson at Peshawur. How did he deal with them?

Bahawulpore is an extensive tract of country to the south of the Sutlej, between the Punjab and Rajpootana, which, so far back as 1809, had acknowledged British supremacy, but had always retained its internal independence. The Nawab, who died at the end of 1852, had done us good service in the second Sikh war, and it was by his special request that we recognised the succession of his third son Saadut Khan, to the exclusion of the eldest, Haji Khan. The elder brother, thanks, doubtless, to the humanity encouraged by the British connection, was saved from the fate which he would have suffered, under similar circumstances, at any purely native court, and was only confined in prison. He soon escaped, and a civil war followed. The Chief Commissioner was at first disposed to prevent disturbances which would be likely to spread to the adjoining districts of the Punjab, by giving help to the younger brother; but, finding that the Daoudputras, the dominant clan in the country, were in favour of the elder, wisely determined, with Lord Dalhousie's advice, to leave the matter to settle itself—as it usually does in the East—by the survival of the fittest. The elder brother gained the day; and the Chief Commissioner then stepped in, on the plea of humanity alone, negotiated the release of the younger brother from prison and from death, and gave him an asylum at Lahore, on the understanding that he was never to revive his claims.

It was a trifling episode, but was managed with skill, and involved, as I am inclined to think, important consequences: for it was the first instance of that wise non-interference with the internal affairs of neighbouring States which, henceforward, became a ruling principle of John Lawrence's policy, and to which he consistently adhered, even when, as in the case of Shere Ali, and the rival claimants to the Ameership of Afghanistan, it exposed him to the easy ridicule and the persistent hostility of those who would secure, or endanger, our

Indian frontier by a series of aggressive or unnecessary wars beyond it. By non-interference in this instance he had avoided a war and the still worse evil of forcing a ruler on unwilling subjects. In how many frontier wars should we have been, ere now, engaged, and how many puppet kings should we have placed upon neighbouring thrones, and then have seen dethroned again, had he adopted, and had the Governments of England and of India approved, of the contrary policy!

The tribes on our western frontier—partly because they were overawed by our conquest of their formidable oppressors, the Sikhs, and partly also because they were surprised and satisfied by our unaggressive attitude towards themselves—had, hitherto, given us much less trouble than the character of their country and the whole course of their history would have led us to expect. But barbarians are often ready to attribute forbearance and moderation—qualities of which they know so little themselves—to a consciousness of weakness; and it was not till various tribes had essayed to cross our frontier and burn our villages, and had tested, to their cost, the adequacy of our frontier posts and frontier force, for purposes of offence as well as of defence, that they began to attribute our moderation to its true cause—a just, and wise, and consistent policy, based on the knowledge, not of our weakness, but of our strength. Most of these raids were repelled or punished at the cost of very few men and very little money. But Peshawur, surrounded as it was by hostile or lately subdued tribes on three sides, was still a standing source of anxiety.

Peshawur (wrote John Lawrence, on September the 1st) is unlike any other place, except, perhaps, Bunnoo. In these two districts all the people have been robbers and murderers from their cradles. It is not a section of the people with whom we have to deal; it is the whole mass.

The letter had hardly been written when news came that Mackeson, the Commissioner of Peshawur, a first-rate soldier and a good political officer, had himself fallen a victim to the dagger of the assassin. A shoemaker by trade had come to the verandah in which Mackeson was holding Court on a dull dusty afternoon, had pretended to faint, had staggered towards the Commissioner, and had thrust his dagger into his right breast. There had been great sickness that year among the troops at Peshawur. The garrison was, at that moment, reduced to one-third of its proper strength, and, in the alarm which naturally ensued, the deed of blood was put down to the instigation of the

Ameer of Kabul, to the Akhund of Swat, and I know not how many potentates besides. Expeditions against all of them were talked of by irresponsible politicians in the cantonments and station of Peshawur. James, who had to 'officiate' as Commissioner of Peshawur in Mackeson's place, condemned the murderer to death without observing any of the forms of justice. Troops were ordered up by the military authorities from Wuzeerabad to Rawul Pindi, and from Rawul Pindi to Peshawur, and then were counter-ordered before they reached their destination, to the great increase of the general confusion and alarm. A plot was discovered, or imagined, to seize the cantonments at Rawul Pindi when deserted by their proper garrison, and Nadir Khan, a discontented son of the Raja of Mandla, escaped to the hills, hoping to gather the hill-tribes round him.

But John Lawrence, who happened to be at Simla, kept his head; rebuked James sternly, by return of post, for his neglect of the rules of procedure, and for having yielded to the general panic; ordered the execution of the murderer to be put off till all legal forms had been duly complied with, and till some effort had been made to find out whether he had accomplices; suggested all the precautions in Peshawur and its neighbourhood which seemed really necessary, and was soon able to convince others, as he had already convinced himself, that, in a hotbed of fanaticism like Peshawur it was unnecessary to look for any prompting from Kabul or from Swat for such a deed.

The murderer was hanged, after his case had been duly reinvestigated, and his body was burned and his ashes scattered to the winds, to prevent the place of his burial being turned into a place of pilgrimage, and so, into an incitement to fresh murders, by the barbarous surrounding tribes. Edward Thornton's promptitude and courage enabled him, at the expense of a bullet-wound in the throat from a skulking foe, to overtake and capture Nadir Khan before any rising in the hills had taken place. Other reassuring measures produced their proper effect, and the panic, which had, at one time, threatened to be a dangerous one, subsided almost as quickly as it had spread.

But the unsatisfactory state of things revealed by the murder of Mackeson, and its sequel, determined John Lawrence to go to Peshawur himself, that he might see with his own eyes how far the measures suggested by him, two years before, had been carried out, and that he might concert with the new Commissioner, whoever he

might be, measures which might make life and property more secure, and attach the inhabitants to our rule.

Mackeson (he says) looked only to political and military matters, and neglected that which he never understood—the civil administration. He was always looking beyond the border rather than into our own management. We are strangers and infidels in the eyes of the people. If we cannot give them peace and security, how can we make our rule popular? Though it is not necessary, and, probably, not practicable, to give the same polish to things on the border as in the interior of the country, a vigorous and intelligent executive is even of more consequence there than elsewhere, for neglect produces more fatal and pernicious consequences. . . . It seems to me, the mistake we make is this: We put incapable men into the command of the garrison, and then, to mend matters, we select good soldiers for our civil administrators. Thus both departments go to the dogs. Give the Peshawur command to such men as Patrick Grant, or Franks of H.M. 10th; reorganise your military system there, or, rather, organise a proper one; have troops armed and equipped for hill service; thoroughly subdue every hill-tribe which gives us just cause of complaint, and make your civil officers devote their energies to the administration of the country. You will then overcome the tribes, satisfy the people, and be respected everywhere. As it is now, we are neither feared by our enemies nor respected by our subjects. No man appreciated Mackeson's high qualities more than I did, but work I could not get out of him. I have written five times officially, and three times privately, before I could get an answer to an ordinary reference! Everything was in arrears. The people felt that their affairs were not attended to; and yet we are surprised and indignant that they do not like us.

The important and immediate question was, who the new Commissioner of Peshawur was to be. Lord Dalhousie had candidates of his own in view, and had, more than once, met the Chief Commissioner's recent recommendations with what the Chief Commissioner himself happily called 'an imperial *No*.' But this was an occasion on which John Lawrence could not afford to be modest, and, with all his earnestness and decision, he pressed on the Governor-General the pre-eminent claims of Herbert Edwardes for Peshawur, and of John Becher for Huzara.

The answer was that they might go there now, but it must be distinctly understood that their appointments were only temporary. But John Lawrence was not to be silenced, and his reply is interesting, partly, as giving his deliberate opinion of his distinguished subordinate —an opinion so abundantly justified by the result—partly, as showing,

what I think has never been made public before, nor was known to the person most concerned, nor even to his biographer—that Lord Dalhousie's candidate for Peshawur was a man more distinguished still—the Bayard of India—the late Sir James Outram. There were obvious objections to such an appointment, which John Lawrence was not slow to urge, but it is not without interest to those who know the circumstances to speculate as to what might have been the result on the destinies of both men and both provinces had the most distinguished 'soldier political' of the Scinde frontier been transferred to the post of danger on that of the Punjab, and become subject to the control of the great Punjab civilian, who had so much of a soldier's heart. Would Sir James Outram, for instance, have been able, or would he have desired, to introduce into the Punjab frontier policy any part of what was best in that of the rival province? Would he have been able, without entering on any aggressive wars, to have acquired over the untamed Afridis and Mohmunds any such influence as that which he had acquired over the more manageable and peaceful Beluchis and Bheels? Would, finally, the chivalrous defender of native princes and races everywhere have taken up the weapons which had dropped from Henry Lawrence's hand, and so have renewed the struggles of the Board; or would he have been able to work cordially with the modified views of his new master?

John Lawrence writes, on October 6, 1853:—

Lahore.

My Lord,—I feel grateful for the consideration which your letter displays, and the best return which I can make will be to state honestly and fully my views on the important point of naming a Commissioner for Peshawur.

I have already informed your Lordship that I consider that Edwardes would worthily fill the appointment. After thinking well over the subject, and comparing in my mind his qualities with those possessed by others, I have no hesitation in saying that I would much prefer to have him there. In original ability, and in education, he will bear comparison with any officer, civil or military, that I know. He has excellent judgment, good temper, force of character, and considerable knowledge of the natives. His military and political talents are considerable. He does not possess extensive civil experience, but has had two years' good training, which, to a man of his ability, is equal to double that period with most other people. He has had the advantage of seeing the working of the civil administration in all its details by having charge of a District which had been regularly settled and managed, and he has served under

one of the ablest Commissioners (Donald Macleod) in India. When he left Jullundur, Macleod pronounced him to be the best District officer he had ever met with. Without subscribing to this opinion, I know few better ones; and, as a Commissioner, he would perhaps be more at home than even in charge of a District. Edwardes possesses broad views, a conciliatory and kindly disposition, and a natural aptitude for civil administration, which he admires. Such a man is more likely to reconcile the Peshawuris to our rule than any other who is available, while he has all the qualities to command the esteem of his military comrades, and the respect of the frontier tribes.

I have known him intimately for seven years, and we are on terms of the most affectionate intimacy. There is a considerable difference in our ages, and I am sure I possess much influence with him. My wishes and judgment are, therefore, strongly in his favour.

Edwardes' reputation has, no doubt, excited the jealousy of his own service, to which he is an honour; but that feeling has greatly lessened since his return from England. He was much liked at Jullundur. He is, doubtless, a young soldier, but cannot be less than from thirty-two to thirty-three years old, and possesses sufficient military rank. . . .

As regards Outram, I feel much delicacy in even discussing his character. He is a fine soldier and a noble fellow; but he is much my senior in age, and has been accustomed to the highest charges. Such a man could not brook, not merely my control, which would be sufficiently irksome, but that of the Judicial and Financial Commissioners. It is not possible that he possesses any knowledge of civil administration. He has been bred in the political school altogether, and must, therefore, follow its received opinions. He will look to the feelings and prejudices of the higher classes, and not to the interests of the mass of the people. No man can teach that which he does not know. Be his intentions what they may, he will naturally follow the bent of his own views and experience. That assiduous attention to the routine of administrative details, that prompt response to all references, however apparently trivial, and that exact attention to instructions, can only be secured in officers regularly trained to their duties.

We are strangers in language, colour, and religion to the people, who, beyond the Indus, are peculiarly intractable, fanatical, and warlike. To reconcile them to our rule requires the most careful and able management. The decision of every social question becomes of political importance. We require a light and equable land-tax, carefully distributed, that the influential and the cunning may not shift a portion of their burthen on to their humbler neighbours. We want a system of police which shall be prompt, resolute, and discriminating, but not oppressive; a form of procedure of the utmost simplicity, and, at the same time, so carefully guarded that the facilities for oppression shall be minimised;

a judicial system stern and decided, but thoroughly intelligible. All these qualities it may be difficult to secure under the greatest precautions, but it is hopeless to find them in any system without the careful training of our officers. . . .

Having now said my say, I can only add that, on whomsoever your Lordship's choice may fall, I will do all I can to make his position easy and to facilitate business.

It is hardly necessary to say that representations so forcible were met, on this occasion, by an 'imperial' Yes, and Edwardes was at once gazetted Commissioner of Peshawur. Before the middle of the month, John Lawrence had set out to join him there. His intention was to settle, in concert with him, so far as they admitted of an immediate settlement, the many burning questions at Peshawur: to improve the defences of the frontier, to suggest alterations in the composition of the garrison, to coerce the Afridis and other barbarous tribes who had broken their engagements and menaced our possession of the Kohat pass, and, finally, to clear off the arrears left by Mackeson —among other things 'twenty-four sessions cases a year and upwards old!' This done, he proposed to visit Mooltan, a part of the Punjab which, strange as it may seem. he had never yet seen, and which he had reason to believe was much behind the rest of the country in organisation and development. Thence, he was to travel up the whole length of the Derajat to Peshawur, again inspecting all the frontier posts and forts, and judging for himself of the success of the administration, and of the condition of the people in each district. This programme, extensive as it was, he carried out to the letter. It was a good six months' work, and his letters to Lord Dalhousie, to Courtenay and others are so numerous during the early part of it, that here, if nowhere else in his life, they serve almost the purpose of a diary, from which I propose to make such short quotations as possess any special interest, or are characteristic of the man, or of his work:—

To Courtenay.

October 11, 1853.

There is no extraordinary difficulty in managing Peshawur, if we go about it in the right way. . . . I will engage, with Edwardes' aid, to have it in excellent order in six months. The military part is not so easy. With one-half of the army screaming through the press for active measures, we have the other half averse to service in the hills. This latter feeling arises from various causes, but mainly from a want of confidence in the leading officers, and the inability of our native troops, with their present

arms and equipments, to cope with the mountaineers. If this be the real evil, the remedy is in our own hands. Select the officer who shall command at Peshawur—Outram would do it admirably. Give him brevet rank. Take away the Regular Infantry of your native army, and place a portion of them at Attock. Keep three European corps of infantry at Peshawur and Noushera, with the proper proportion of guns, and raise several Irregular corps of infantry of picked men of different castes, all armed and accoutred for mountain warfare. Put none but first-rate officers to these corps. Do this, and you will hear no more of these alarms and dangers from insurrections and religious wars.

To the same.

Jhelum: October 16.

The object of mounting the guns 'quietly' was to prevent excitement. While preparing to pitch into a fellow, I would not frighten him into a revolt. Quietly as guns are put up, folks are not slow to see them. Nothing, in my mind, conduces more to overawe the natives than a quiet, resolute demeanour. It is these cursed ranting fellows, who see a conspirator in every chap they meet, who march and countermarch troops and the like, that do the mischief and make the natives think we funk. One soldier like Will Mayne, or Outram, is doubtless worth a brigade, if *in command*, on such occasions. If we could make an example of one Afridi clan, as Mayne has done, we should hear no more of their villany and insolence. Thomason is a great loss, a greater one than many can understand. He was a real administrator, not a Brummagem. The Governor-General's eulogium on him was a just and kind one. I hit on John Colvin as his successor the moment I heard of poor Thomason's death. . . . I never dreamed of the appointment myself; I feel that I am tied to the Punjab for the rest of my official existence, which, however, I hope may not be a very long one.

To Edwardes.

Jhelum: October 16.

I am very glad that you will be at Peshawur by the 18th. I think it is a great pity that our officers write and speak as they do. They seem determined to damage themselves and the administration as effectually as they can. It was quite refreshing to get a chit from Johnnie Becher, corroborating as it does your account of the peaceful disposition of the Huzara people.

To Lord Dalhousie.

Camp Hutti, fourteen miles from Attock:
October 26, 1853.

The regular Sepoys hate Peshawur, though food is cheap there. They prefer this side of the Indus without the *batta* to Peshawur with it. They are unfit for service in the hills from habit, discipline, and organisation;

but they will do sufficiently well as a counterpoise to more efficient troops. To keep Peshawur quiet, we want an efficient and popular administration, and the thorough subjection of every hill-tribe. By subjection, I mean that they must learn to fear and obey us, not that they should become our subjects. Picked troops, armed with rifles and lightly equipped, would carry the terror of our arms into the most rugged fastnesses and the steepest hills.

To Courtenay.

Camp Nouchera: October 29.

I think poor Charlie Napier will probably make an ass of himself in his posthumous work. Like Falstaff's sack, which bore so large a proportion in his daily expenditure compared with bread, there will be in Napier's work very much about himself, and little about India. He was so eaten up with passion and prejudice that his really good qualities had not fair play.

Lord Dalhousie had asked his Lieutenant pointedly in one of his letters, 'Which way do your eyes turn in the future, to Council or to Agra?' and added in a postscript, which may be worth quotation, as showing the growth of intimacy between John Lawrence and the 'Lord Sahib,' who never himself forgot, or allowed anyone else to forget, that he was Governor-General: 'I have just cast my eyes by chance on your letter, and see, what never struck me before, that "My Lord" begins and ends it. Don't you think "My dear Lord" would suit the terms of friendship and cordiality on which we have long been? I think so, for my part.'

The following was the answer:—

My dear Lord,—I think the selection of John Colvin for the Lieutenant-Governorship of the N.-W. Provinces will give general satisfaction. There is no civilian there who can challenge comparison with him. I have never myself had a thought of leaving the Punjab, so long as I possessed health and strength, and Government were satisfied with my services. The circumstances under which I was selected for the post bound me by every tie of honour to look for nothing more. It is a very arduous post, and one in which we cannot always command success. I have no ambition to be a member of Council. If ever Agra was offered to me, and I could take it with honour, I should hardly, perhaps, refuse. But I would prefer remaining here for many years, so long, that is, as I can do the duty efficiently. I should like to fix my own impress on the administration, and show what even a civilian can do in a new country.

Your Lordship will perceive that I have taken advantage of the kind invitation contained in the postscript of your note, and beg to subscribe myself, my dear Lord, Yours sincerely,

JOHN LAWRENCE.

John Lawrence arrived at Peshawur on October 31, but found that so large a number of the garrison there were still prostrate with sickness, that none could be spared to join him in coercing the hostile Afridis of the two passes which lead thence to the famous Kohat valley. But he found plenty of other work to do. He inspected, in company with Robert Napier, the fortifications of the town. He endeavoured to press on to its completion that remote portion of the Grand Trunk Road, by applying to Golab Sing for the help of 500 Kashmiris. He spent the mornings of each day, from a very early hour up to noon, in exploring the surrounding country, and the afternoons in clearing off the sessions cases of a year's standing left by Mackeson, 'all of them,' observes John Lawrence, 'desperate fellows.' He built the long-talked-of fort at the entrance of the Kohat pass, as a means of coercing the Afridis of that pass; and he made one more effort for peace by sending for the Mulliks of the Afridis belonging to the other pass, and, after three days of consultation with them, succeeded in bringing them to terms.

But there was one clan among them—the Bori Afridis—who were not so amenable to reason. They inhabited a cluster of villages in the interior of the hills, supposed to be impregnable. During the last two years, they had made many raids into the Peshawur valley, had harboured twenty-four outlaws of the Rawul Pindi district, had furnished them with horses for the express purpose of robbery and murder, and had repeatedly carried off British subjects, whom they still held to ransom. The Chief Commissioner demanded that the prisoners should be set free, the plunder restored, and the horses of the robber band surrendered. The demand was flatly refused, and the Boris sent a message to him bidding him to do his worst. This was too much for the Chief Commissioner. His old military ardour was aroused. He had a just cause and, what was not likely to occur again in his lifetime, a chance of planning and directing military operations himself.

An elaborate plan for attacking the mountaineers simultaneously at very different points, so as to inflict more signal retribution and produce more lasting effect, was prepared by him in person and was approved of, to his great delight, by such good soldiers as Norman, Lumsden, Cotton, and James, and was only given up when it was found that General Roberts, who was then in command at Peshawur, and who will be known to posterity chiefly as the father of his illustrious son, Sir Frederick Roberts, was still unable to supply the contingent

which was necessary. 'Well,' said John, 'if we cannot do all we want, at least, we will do all we can.' And he sent off at once for the Guides from Hoti Murdan, whose presence would raise the troops at his own disposal to 1,300 men. Coke, 'a fine plucky soldier, positive and opinionated, but honest and straightforward,' was still for trying other measures, but the Chief Commissioner stood firm. 'An example,' he said, 'is absolutely necessary. I think that I have, long enough, given up my own plans to assist yours, and that the time has come to resume the former. . . . I hold to my plan to attack Bori on Tuesday. I am not to be dissuaded from it on any account.' The attack was accordingly made on November 29, and with the result which he described, on the following day, in a spirited letter to Lord Dalhousie.

November 30, 1853.

My dear Lord,—I write a line to say that we, yesterday, crossed the low range and entered the valley in which the Bori Afridis are, destroyed their villages, and came out the same day. We were out in this affair sixteen hours; so it was a very hard day's work for the troops. We had a splendid little force: Guides, 450; Ghoorkas, 400; Europeans, 400; Native Infantry, 20. The Afridis fought desperately, and the mode in which the Guides and the Ghoorkas crowned the heights which commanded the villages was the admiration of every officer present. These are, indeed, the right sort of fellows. Our loss is eight men killed and twenty-four wounded. The men got no water and suffered a good deal.

I think this expedition is calculated to do much good. The Bori valley has not been entered by an enemy for many hundred years, I believe, and the *prestige* which will attend the affair will be proportioned to the success of the operation. The Afridis of the lower hills at the mouth of the pass behaved extremely well. They sat on the heights around, but did not fire a shot.

The Afridis of the lower hills were those, it should be explained, with whom we had just come to terms, and who might have been expected, after the manner of their kind, to rise against him all the more readily.

'But,' says the Chief Commissioner, 'I sat during the engagement for two hours yesterday in the villages of Toorana, with the sides of the hill covered with these armed men, and I saw our troops come through the gorge and not a shot was fired at them. They brought our men water to drink and, in fact, behaved remarkably well towards us.' The arts of the Chief Commissioner were, on this occasion, as successful as his arms. And I have dwelt on the operations,

small as they were, all the more because of the characteristic enjoyment and ardour with which eye-witnesses have told me that he planned and took part in them, and because I have myself heard him, when he was enfeebled with age and disease, speak with boyish glee and a visible sparkle in his almost sightless grey eyes, of the occasion when, as Chief Commissioner, he had managed so far to thwart his peaceful destiny as, for one day at least, to be 'under fire!' I may add that the destruction of so strong a place had the best effect, and there was no subsequent trouble from the Bori quarter.

An attempt to assassinate Lieutenant Godby, of the Guides, at Murdan followed, with startling rapidity, upon the assassination of Mackeson. But the panic which followed Mackeson's death had fortunately been allayed before this new deed of violence. And, still more fortunately, the Chief Commissioner happened to be at Peshawur when it took place, and no new panic was possible in his presence.

Peshawur: December 2, 8 P.M.

My dear Lord,—I came in here this day. I am sorry to say that about two P.M. a horseman came in from Hoti Murdan, where Lieutenant Godby was with the Guide Cavalry, and told us that that officer had been stabbed in the back this morning by a man who was cut to pieces, on the instant, by the Guides. The man who came in was a jemadar, a very intelligent fellow. He says that poor Godby was standing in the middle of camp, superintending the loading of some camels, when a snake came out from beneath some stones, on which he ran and put his foot upon its head. While bending down doing this, a little, old-looking man, whom nobody had noticed, rushed forward and stabbed him in the back. Nobody seemed to know who he was or whence he came. I will write again directly I hear further particulars.

Happily Godby was a young man, and of a spare habit of body. This gave him a better chance of life, and, in ten days, he was pronounced to be out of danger.

After an inspection of the frontier forts to the north of Peshawur, the Chief Commissioner returned, by December 9, to Lahore, that he might spend a few days with his family before the second great break in it occurred. Three of his children—his two eldest sons, John and Henry, and his third daughter, Alice Margaret—he was obliged to send to England. But as in the case of his two eldest daughters, some kind friends—Mr. and Mrs. Charles Saunders, of Umritsur—volunteered to escort them, and, a few days after their departure, John Lawrence and his wife, with the one child, a baby, who was

now left to them, were glad to exchange their desolate home at Lahore, which he 'found insupportable,' for the excitement of camp life and the tour to Mooltan and the Derajat.

An extract from a letter to Edwardes, written just as he left Lahore, gives some particulars of his power of getting through work which have a biographical interest :—

Our officers should be young men, rough-and-ready fellows, fit to put their hands to any work against time and tide. I cannot believe that the treasury can take up the time of one officer. If I were Deputy-Commissioner I would be bound to prove that it did not take up one-half his time. I don't speak without cause : I had charge of a treasury for six years, unaided, and the time it occupied was hardly appreciable. For instance, if I had to see money counted, I took my work to the treasury, and, while my ears were hearing reports and cases, my eyes were looking at money being counted. I signed and checked bills while evidence was being taken by my side. Half-an-hour a day sufficed to look over the accounts, with perhaps a couple of days' extra work in a couple of months.

At Mooltan, he examined, with a soldier's interest, the spots made famous by the murders of Agnew and Anderson, by the daring deeds of Edwardes, and by the chequered but ultimately successful siege. Then, passing through a wild and uncleared country, in which he found, to his surprise and disgust, that thefts and burglary and cattle-stealing were still very common, he reached Dera Ghazi Khan. Here he left the ladies of his party—his wife and Mrs. Macpherson, the wife of his indefatigable Military Secretary—and, with his horse and a small camp, dropped down the river to Mitthancote, the southern extremity of his province, and the point where the Indus receives in one stream of hardly less volume than its own the united waters of the five rivers of the Punjab. Thence he marched back again, along the frontier posts and forts, to Dera Ghazi Khan, where he received a visit from a wild Khatteran chieftain, Haji Khan, a man who came from far beyond our frontier, and had 'never seen a European before,' but offered to forward him letters from Kandahar—which might be of importance in view of the Russian war just then breaking out—and even volunteered to join us in an expedition against the formidable Murris !

Lord Dalhousie, in reply to John Lawrence's letter detailing the circumstances of this interview, writes :—

Perhaps you may make something of Haji Khan Khatteran. By the

way, as this man had never seen a European before, it was very politic of you to show *yourself* to him as the first specimen of the conquering race! I have no doubt he will be as desirous to retain a recollection of you as I am, and as I have lately taken the liberty of showing. For I have to apologise to you for getting a daguerreotype taken from the portrait of you which Mr. C. Saunders brought down. It was exceedingly like, and I have great pleasure in possessing it. You will pardon, I hope, my taking it without leave.

Lord Dalhousie had proposed to give a jagheer, in recognition of his services, to Futteh Khan Khuttuck, a russeldar of the Guides, who had performed strange deeds of daring on our behalf, and had recently done us good service in the fight in the Bori valley, but had been obliged in consequence of a disagreement with Hodson, the commandant, to leave the regiment. John Lawrence admitted the value of his services, but objected to this mode of requiting them, and he gave a description of the man which is worth quoting for its vigour :—

I frankly confess I am afraid to try Futteh Khan in such a position, or, indeed, as a jagheerdar at all. I have seen a good deal of the man, and have heard much more. The value of his services I admit; his peculiar martial qualities I admire; but I look upon him as a perfect devil when his blood is up, and this is very often. At such a moment he would murder his nearest and dearest relative or friend. He has many and bitter feuds throughout Khuttuck, and is grasping and domineering beyond all bounds. Such a man, in possession of a jagheer, would screw the cultivators, oust the proprietors of the soil, and invade the boundaries of his neighbours. Let him alone, and he would become a pest; attempt to curb him, and he resents the interference as a deadly wrong.

I confess, when I have seen his eye flashing and his whole frame quivering with emotion, as he narrated his real or fancied injuries, I could not but think what a dangerous enemy he could prove, if vested with any power. Lumsden was Futteh Khan's great friend and supporter, but even he found it difficult to manage him. Futteh did much to injure Lumsden's reputation by his acts.

I will mention an anecdote I once heard of Futteh Khan from Lumsden himself. Futteh Khan and his two brothers often quarrelled, though they made common cause against others. During one of these disputes, the three brothers never met, even at their meals, except with their weapons bare, ready for use. The two younger were on one side and Futteh on the other. This went on for some three months, when, one day, the youngest brother was called suddenly away. Futteh took the opportunity to dart on the other, seize him by the hair, and force his head into the

hot ashes, where he held it until his victim called out '*tobah*' (repentance), and gave in. . . . Futteh Khan was, for many years, a regular freebooter, and would not hesitate to return to the same life.

It is a very delicate and difficult thing to manage a tract by means of a native chief. One can make it over to his tender mercies, but this is not managing it. Under us, a chief can really do more harm than if he is independent or under a native ruler, for then he must, to a considerable extent, conciliate the people. Under us, there is no such necessity. It is difficult to say whether a weak or energetic chief is most mischievous. If strong, he plunders for himself, makes himself hateful, and brings on us reproach. If weak, his followers plunder, and he is despised, and the country falls into disorder. It is most difficult, also, to get at the real state of affairs; all in power are interested in concealing the truth; those who are injured exaggerate their wrongs; and those who might give useful information are indifferent, averse to the trouble and even the danger, of such interference.

It need hardly be added that, after such a letter, no more was heard of a jagheer for Futteh Khan. His merits, such as they were, were acknowledged in another and less objectionable fashion. But I would remark here that seldom, after a long number of years, has a prophecy been so literally fulfilled as this of John Lawrence with respect to the ill-starred Khuttuck chieftain; for, twenty-seven years later, in 1880, Futteh Khan died, a convicted murderer, in the Peshawur jail. The wild spirit of the savage, as an Indian newspaper, written, I believe, by one who knew him well, expresses it, deepened gradually into the moody madness of a disappointed man who had failed to obtain the one prize which was dear to his heart. Reviling the Government for fancied wrongs, on account of which he refused to draw his pension; at enmity with his brothers and son; deceived and robbed by his own wife; feared and shunned by his neighbours, Futteh Khan brooded over his fortunes till the temper which had ruined him became an even greater curse to himself than to those who met him. At last, goaded into fury by the taunts of a man who demanded payment of a sum due to him for grain, Futteh committed a murder in the heart of the city of Peshawur, and the fate which John Lawrence had feared for him, in 1853, overtook him. Probably the clemency of Government would, in consideration of his previous services, have been extended to him, but before this could be, he died of fever in jail, cursing those who could arrest and condemn a man who had done them such good service, for so trivial a cause!

During the whole of this period, John Lawrence was much occupied by troubles connected with the famous Hodson, who was in command of the Guides, and one or two of his letters, selected from many scores which bear upon the subject, will be read with interest. The correspondence, as a whole, shows convincingly with what forbearance John Lawrence treated Hodson, how he appreciated his soldier-like qualities, and his varied talents, how he bore with his shortcomings, and how unwilling he was, so long as he could possibly do otherwise, to believe the worst of him. It was very slowly and reluctantly that he came to that belief: all the more slowly, I am persuaded, from his chivalrous desire to stand by a man whom, in his earlier and better days, his brother Henry had taken under his patronage. John Lawrence did not know then what many of his friends knew well enough—for Sir Henry had told them so himself—that his brother had ceased to believe in Hodson's integrity as regards money matters, from the time when he had accompanied him in his tour to Kashmere and had found himself in command of the money-chest there. That Hodson had many fine and engaging qualities, to begin with, is certain, and that his moral decline was gradual is also certain.

It is certain, once more, that when Hodson first entered the Punjab as a friend of Henry Lawrence, every friend of Henry Lawrence—and there was no one in the Punjab who was not his friend—was prepared to welcome, to help, and to like him. It is preposterous, therefore, to suppose, as Hodson's fraternal biographer appears to do, that there was a general conspiracy against him—a conspiracy of some of the best and ablest men who have been in India, men who were intimate friends of Henry Lawrence and had the minutest knowledge of all the facts of the case, the officers of Hodson's own regiment, and the Commissioners and Deputy-Commissioners of his own and adjoining districts!

Hodson had been appointed to the command of the Guides by Lord Dalhousie, and, with John Lawrence's approval, had received, at the same time, the civil charge of the Eusofzye district. It was the post of all others which he had coveted, and which seemed to give the best opening to his splendid qualities as a soldier. It is certain, therefore, that, in September 1852, when he received the command, neither Lord Dalhousie nor John Lawrence can have had any prejudice against him. He had hardly entered on his duties when complaints began to pour in, from both soldiers and civilians, of

arbitrary and oppressive treatment; and as early as March 22, 1853, I find John Lawrence writing thus to Courtenay :—

Hodson is, I believe, very unpopular, both in the Guides and with military men generally. I don't know exactly why this is. It cannot be that he has got promotion too early; for, though a young soldier, he is almost a middle-aged man. He is an officer of first-rate ability, and has received an excellent education. He is gallant, zealous, and intelligent, and yet few men like him. It is the case of the famous Dr. Fell, whom the young lady did not like, but could not tell why she did not do so.

John Lawrence would not have acted like himself if he had heard of these complaints and had not tried to remove their cause, and the letter of which I quote a few sentences is, again, anything but unfriendly in its tone :—

August 7, 1853.

As regards the general feeling of the regiment to yourself, you must not be hurt at what I say, for I do it simply and solely for your own good. You may depend on it that neither the European nor the native officers are as *razi* (contented) as they might be. I have heard it from half-a-dozen different quarters. At Lahore I have heard it talked of by several parties. I have heard it direct from Peshawur and direct from Calcutta. There may have been faults on their part, and the discipline may not have been altogether what it ought to have been. But sudden changes are best avoided. The corps got a great name under Lumsden, who was beloved, I may say, for even his very defects, to say nothing of his virtues. If right men go wrong, people will blame you. I don't think that Pathans can bear a very strict system of drill and setting up at any time. For all these reasons, therefore, I would introduce my reforms very slowly and carefully, carrying them out in a way as little vexatious as possible.

What I write is for your private ear alone. I wish you to take counsel of me, not to repeat what I write, which will only make matters worse. I heard that you addressed Futteh Khan as Futteh Khan *Mazool* (turned out); this was sufficient to set such a chap all of a blaze.

The next extract indicates that the tension was becoming greater.

Camp Mooltan : February 2, 1854.

My dear Hodson,—Why don't you send a reply to official requisitions? What is to become of you if you will not answer letters? It will not be practicable to carry on work. I hear that you say you work night and day, but at what I can't think! A clever fellow like you ought to have little difficulty in getting through business with proper despatch.

I want a reply to the reference about native officers being appointed

and dismissed by the commandant of the Guides. I cannot reply to a reference from Government until I get it.

There is another matter about which Melvill wrote. I allude to my brother's Kashmere accounts. If you cannot give the information asked for, why not say so? If you can, let me have it. Every month's delay makes the adjustment of them more difficult. . . .

What are you doing with Kader Khan's son in limbo? What has *he* to do with the acts of his father? Why is not Kader Khan brought to trial before the Commissioner?

The next extract indicates greater tension still.

Dera Ismael Khan: March 9, 1854.

My dear Hodson,—Read the enclosed memo., and tell me when you intend giving the information. It is now nearly six months since you were asked to report on the appointment and dismissal of officers in your corps. Now it is not reasonable to suppose that matters can work well if you thus delay to furnish information required of you. Besides the official reminders, I have written once privately, but with no result. I want you to clearly understand that, if we are to work together, which I sincerely hope we shall do, you must make up your mind to obey punctually all requisitions. It will not answer to say that you are overwhelmed with arrears and the like. I see you have time to answer letters when you like. So pray make up your mind to reply to all in due course. This is the last time that I shall write thus on this subject.

The next extract has a special interest, as I take it from one of the few letters which passed between the Lawrence brothers during this period.

Murri: May 6, 1854.

My dear Henry,—I have just got yours of the 24th. . . . I am in great tribulation about Hodson of the Guides. I don't know what to make of him. His courage and ability are unquestioned. I could excuse his not getting on with his subalterns, for a man like Lumsden would spoil most men under him, at least for any other commander. Lumsden also seems to have left the accounts in great disorder, and Hodson has not gone about getting them right. He is now getting rid, or has got rid, of the greater part of his Pathans and Afridis. Perhaps even this is better than keeping men who dislike him. But now I hear that all the European people dislike him, and that mischief may get up there. He had a scuffle with a *moonshi* of the Guides the other day, which ended in the man striking him in the face!

I tell you all this, not that it can do any good, but that you may not think that I have *spited* him. I was averse to his getting the Guides from a kind of indefinable idea that he was not the man for them; but, since

he has got them, I have endeavoured to get on as well as I could with him. To me, personally, he has always been amiable and most courteous, but I would give a good deal to see him elsewhere, for I fear a row.

But, soon, other and more painful questions, connected with the account-books of his regiment and his pecuniary dealings generally, came to the front. It is impossible to go fully into the case here, but a long string of letters shows that John Lawrence, if, sometimes, he could not help fearing the worst, was always anxious to hope for the best respecting them. I quote one extract. It is a sufficient answer to the imputations attempted to be thrown upon John Lawrence and his subordinates throughout the book called 'Twelve Years of a Soldier's Life.'

June 27, 1855.

The delay in disposing of your case has not been caused by me, nor have I, in the slightest degree, said or done aught to injure your character. I have wished that your case should be disposed of by the court composed of your brother officers. But I may truly add that I have often expressed an opinion that nothing injurious to your character as a gentleman would be proved. I have believed, and still believe, that irregularities, procrastination, and general mismanagement were the main faults of which you were guilty. An officer may be culpable without being criminal. He may have done nothing dishonourable, and yet be deemed unfit to command a corps like the Guides. . . . I have written this letter in reply to your note, because my silence might have been misconstrued. It is with regret that I have said anything to give you pain, and, for the future, I would rather not discuss the merits of your case. If you think that further inquiry would benefit your cause, you should, I think, ask for it from the Commander-in-Chief.

The Court of Inquiry, after protracted examination, arrived at conclusions which were very unfavourable to Hodson's character, and which no subsequent investigation, such as that of Major Reynell Taylor, which was conducted under wholly different conditions and had reference to a portion only of the charges, could seriously invalidate. The papers were duly forwarded to Lord Dalhousie for his decision, but before he had time to go through them, Hodson became involved in another trouble which brought matters to a crisis. It was not, therefore, as has been commonly supposed, upon the charge of malversation that Hodson lost the command of the Guides. It was for his cruel and arbitrary treatment of a rich native chief, named Kader Khan, who is alluded to in one of the above letters. Lord Dalhousie, to whom the case was reported, deprived him of his

military command and of his civil charge. 'Lieutenant Hodson's case,' he says (September 26, 1855), 'has been lately before me. It is as bad as possible, and I have been compelled to remand him to his regiment with much regret, for he is a gallant soldier and an able man.' The Court of Directors at home, taking an even more serious view of his conduct, gave an order that, under no circumstances, should he receive any other command. He thus disappeared from the Punjab, but he was to come to the front again, in the crisis of the Mutiny—a time which was likely to bring out, as we shall see hereafter that it did, some of his very finest and some of his very worst qualities.

At Dera Ghazi Khan, finding that there were complaints about the land-tax, the summary assessment of which had been lately fixed by the very popular Deputy-Commissioner, Van Cortlandt, the Chief Commissioner went carefully into the matter himself, reduced the assessment still further by thirty thousand rupees, and so brought contentment in his train. 'The people here,' he remarks, 'are, on the whole, very well disposed, quite a different lot from those about Peshawur.' A just observation, and one which, as we shall see hereafter, goes to the root of the quarrel between the Scinde and Punjab frontier schools. For the people of the Southern Derajat, and still more those bordering on the Scinde desert, are of Beluchi origin, are of a mild character, and can be managed, solely or chiefly, by moral methods. The tribes of the Northern Derajat are of Pathan origin, restless, fierce, and untameable, and recognise only the right of the strong arm to restrain them. The Chief Commissioner's general impression of our Trans-Indus possessions was not very favourable. He writes to Colonel Sleeman :—

> I have been making a tour of this frontier. The country is desolate and the people poor and wild, but generally docile and well-behaved. Financially, the lands on the right bank of the Indus are not worth having ; but we require both sides of the river to keep the Punjab quiet, and hold our own against external aggression. The people below Kohat are much less fanatical and hostile than those of the Peshawur valley. . . . The whole of the Derajat is a wretched country, until you pass the Paizoo range. South of that line, the soil is a strong clay, as hard and as level as a deal board, and without a sign of vegetation. Without water the land is not cultivable. Murwut looks pretty well. We like the look of Bunnoo : it is a garden of Eden adjoining a wilderness.

The Deputy-Commissioner of this garden of Eden and of the

adjoining wilderness, it is hardly necessary to say, was the redoubtable 'Warden of the Marches' with whom his chief had been obliged to keep up so brisk a correspondence during the preceding year. Evidences of the good work which John Nicholson had done, in peace as in war, might be seen on every side, and the faithful companion of the Chief Commissioner through the long and rough four months' march, which was now nearing its end, still recalls the pleasure which his society gave to her and to her husband, and the tender care which the chivalrous protector of her two elder daughters on their voyage to England, now lavished, in all the difficulties of the march, on the still younger child who accompanied her.

At Kohat, whose turbulent inhabitants, since the military operations of the preceding autumn, had been peaceful enough, the news reached John Lawrence that Edmonstone, the Financial Commissioner, who had proved, as he said, 'a tower of strength' to him in the Punjab, had been appointed Foreign Secretary to Lord Dalhousie. There succeeded to his place John Lawrence's dear friend, probably the dearest friend he ever had, Donald Macleod. The letter he wrote to him on his appointment is not a little characteristic of the two men and of the relations that existed between them.

Rawul Pindi: April 15, 1854.

My dear Macleod,—I was glad to get your letter of the 11th, and to find you were coming over to Lahore to take charge. I am sure you will make a famous Financial Commissioner. If you only firmly resolve to postpone nothing that can be disposed of at the time, daily getting through what comes before you, there will be nothing further to desire. You do not, I think, give yourself fair play. You are like a racer who, instead of starting off directly the signal is given, waits until the others have got well ahead before he commences his running; or, perhaps, what is nearer the mark, you only consent to make play when you have packed a good maund of traps on your back. Now pray excuse these ungracious remarks. There is no man who regards and respects you more than I do, or who could be better pleased to have you as a colleague. I see but one speck on your official escutcheon, and, like an officious friend, desire to rub it out.

The 'Cunctator,' as John Lawrence used aptly enough to call him, however willing he might be, was unable, at his time of life, to change his tactics. But, if it could not be said of him, as of his prototype at Rome, that he 'saved the State by his delay,' he certainly contributed to that end by the equanimity, the confidence, and the

happiness which his mere presence—the presence of one whom John Lawrence always regarded as one of the highest types of human goodness—gave to the man who, in the struggle that was coming on, was to do most to save it.

From Rawul Pindi, where the steps taken by Edward Thornton, the Commissioner, for placing his civil station, his jails, his cutcherries, and the cantonments, all in close proximity to each other, earned John Lawrence's warm approval, he went with his wife and daughter, who were, both of them, ill from the fatigue and exposure of this Derajat march, to the new hill station of Murri. It was his first visit to the place, but it was by no means to be his last; for the orders of his doctors, and the urgent representations of Lord Dalhousie as to what was due, if not to himself, at least to the public good, constrained him, henceforward, to spend a considerable part of each hot season there. His reluctance to comply with the requests of friends and doctors, and even of the Governor-General, will appear natural enough when we recollect the stern restraint he had always hitherto placed on his own inclinations, as well as on those of his subordinates, to avail themselves, during the fury of the summer, of those 'delectable mountains' which looked down so invitingly from the North. It was an uphill and a thankless struggle, which he could not afford to abandon now, merely because times had changed with him and because it would seem doubly ungracious to refuse to others what he accepted for himself. His subordinates often thought him unreasonably stern in this matter, but the struggle was generally carried on with good temper on both sides, and no one ever questioned his public spirit or the sincerity of his convictions. Indeed, it was still his own inclination to slip away from the hills to the plains even in the height of summer, though when he did so it was always to the injury of his health, and sometimes, as we shall see, to the danger of his life. I must give a specimen or two of his letters on this subject. Here is a letter to Montgomery which refers to a refusal he had felt it his duty to give to one of his Commissioners who was a friend of both :—

I am sorry that —— is riled at the tone of my refusal. It would seem to me that it was the refusal itself which really annoyed him. But, be it the one or the other, I could not help it. What I did was done on public grounds. In such questions I have no friends or enemies; at least I try not to have them. As regards the Chumba affair, if I was capable of acting against my own convictions it would have been for yourself. I voted against Chumba being annexed to Lahore when you were Com-

missioner, and I am convinced that I acted rightly. While I admit the benefit which officers derive from going to the hills, I cannot fail to see how injurious it is to the public service. As a rule, Commissioners who have hill retreats would be there the whole season. They begin by putting in their noses like the fox, and end by slipping in afterwards their bodies and even their tails. Donald is the only man who seems to me to have acted rightly in this respect.

Another letter to a friend to whom he was much attached, but who was disposed to offend in like manner, is of a later date, but may be inserted here.

Camp, Gukhur: November 22, 1855.

My dear Barnes,—I am sorry I shall not see you before you go home, as there is no knowing if we may ever meet again. I think, on the whole, you have made a good Commissioner of the Cis-Sutlej, but not equal to Edmonstone. He is a greater workman than you will ever be. You rely too much on your facility in despatching work, and do not give yourself fair play. Your forte is the revenue line, not the judicial. You are too impulsive for the latter. Still Colvin might get a worse judge. If you come back to me, I shall be glad; if you get promotion elsewhere, I shall be content.

But, if five months are not sufficient for you in the hills, how will you manage when you have to remain at Agra for eleven? I am sorry to find you are vexed at my conduct about the hills, but you will, I hope, give me credit for acting on public grounds. I do not think you can do your duty as it should be done and stay up longer. I do not think that anyone ought to have more than that period in the hills. I could not see you spending seven months there, and make the Commissioners of the Jhelum and Cis-Sutlej divisions come down sooner. I never go up myself before the first of May, and, with the exception of this year, have always hastened down early in October. Indeed, last year I nearly killed myself by coming down for two months in the middle of the hot season. Now, I can do my work in the hills much more conveniently than a Commissioner, and, in coming down as I do, it is much more for example's sake than for work. You and many others think that I am a hard taskmaster. Perhaps I am; but my position requires it. The *dolce far niente* will not answer here. I think that the Commissioners of the Cis-Sutlej and Lahore divisions have more work than they can thoroughly perform. I have told Government so twice. But the Government will not admit it, and therefore I must try and get the work done somehow or other. I assure you my position is no bed of roses. If I had the means, I would go home to-morrow.

'Ah! Barnes,' he would remark in conversation to this same correspondent, with that humorous mixture of praise and blame

which came so well from him—'Ah! Barnes, you are a very clever fellow; you can get through in half an hour what it would take most of us an hour to do equally well; and, if only you would not insist on getting through it in a quarter of an hour instead of half an hour, you would do excellently!' It would have been difficult to hit off the strength and the weakness of his friend more neatly.

The Chief Commissioner's own work went on unremittingly at Murri, in the house of three small rooms which sufficed for his simple wants and those of his wife. 'I have been very busy,' he writes on June 3: 'my pen scarcely ever out of my hand. Certainly writing long reports is very wearisome, and my eyes are not what they used to be. I fear, if I live to be fifty, I shall be blind.' A few days previously, on May 27, a fourth son—Charles Napier—had been born, and, as soon as the mother was sufficiently recovered for him to leave her, the father slipped away to Lahore. But it was a liberty for which he soon had to pay the penalty, for he was attacked by a severe fever which put his life in danger. His medical attendants were, at first, afraid to resort to their usual remedy of bleeding, and it was only at his own urgent request that they consented to open a vein in his arm. This relieved his head, but the positive orders of his doctors and his extreme weakness warned him to make his way back to Murri as soon as possible. The concern of Lord Dalhousie when he heard of his Lieutenant's narrow escape was extreme, and his warning against similar escapades for the future, will illustrate what I have said about the hills:—

September 7.

Murri, I hope, will restore you fully and at once. Next year you must on no account come down into the plains after the hot weather begins. Whatever you do, or leave undone, pray keep your health.

And, again, two days later—

I now regret very sincerely that I did not urge you strongly against quitting Murri to return to Lahore during the heat. But your health has, of late, been so good that the thought of risk to it during this temporary visit to the plains did not present itself to me at the time. I can now only repeat the injunctions which I laid upon you in my last letter, that, next summer, you are to take advantage of the hill stations, so numerous in every part of your jurisdiction, and are not again to risk your health, on which so much of the public interest depends. For the present I would urge you to take *complete rest*, if you can—at any rate, as far as you can—

until your health and strength are again revived. Never mind the Punjab Report, or any other report, but coddle yourself, turn idler, and get yourself up again.

It was during this visit to Lahore that John Lawrence was able to effect a change which he had long desired, which relieved him of a cruel amount of work and worry, and gave him a coadjutor whose ready pen had already done him good service, and who was, in the capacity of his Secretary, for many years to come, to be on the most intimate terms with him. How this came about requires explanation. On the first establishment of the Board, Lord Dalhousie, in a moment of apparent aberration, had appointed Philip Melvill to be its Under-Secretary. He was a man of ability and education, and always pleasant to deal with, but, as the result showed, he proved to be quite unfitted by his training and aptitudes for this particular post. Christian, the Secretary who had been selected by the Board, had, after a very short term of service, gone back to the North-West; and then in a second, and less excusable moment of aberration, Lord Dalhousie had given Melvill his place. Thus the post, of all others in the Punjab, which ought to have been left entirely in the hands of the Board, was the very one—and almost the only one—in the filling up of which they had not been allowed to have any voice.

In June, 1851, as I have already related, John Lawrence had paid a visit to Lord Dalhousie at Simla, had there met Richard Temple, then a very young civilian, and, stopping at Jullundur, on his way back, had examined the work done by him as settlement officer of the district. 'Here is the very man,' he said in conversation with his friends, 'that we want as Secretary. He can understand what I say, and put it into first-rate form. But what can we do? Melvill has been put upon us for ever by Lord Dalhousie.' And, writing shortly afterwards to the Governor-General himself, he thus expresses his opinion of the work which he had examined: 'Young Temple has just finished the settlement at Jullundur; and, during the fifteen months he has been there, has not only worked in first-rate style, but has done an amount of work which scarcely any other three men in the country could have done. He is pre-eminently the most rising officer in the Punjab.'

Unfortunately, this 'most rising officer in the Punjab' had been, soon afterwards, recalled to the North-West by Thomason; but, on the urgent representation of John Lawrence that a new country

must require Temple's energy more than an old one, Thomason consented to surrender him, and Temple was forthwith appointed to the revenue settlement of the Rechna Doab. Passing through Lahore, in January, 1853, on his way to his new post, he saw there, for the first time, 'the great triumvirate,' and often 'danced before Herod,' as his future chief used to describe his frequent visits to him. He worked in the Rechna Doab as hard as he had worked in the Jullundur, and when Lord Dalhousie suggested that a Report should be drawn up, showing what had been done in the Punjab since annexation, the thoughts of the members instinctively turned towards him. The duty properly belonged to Melvill, who tried his hand at it. But the results of his efforts were so inadequate, that by general consent—that of Lord Dalhousie as well as of the Board, a *deus ex machina* was called in, in the shape of the young settlement officer. The summons reached Temple late in the evening: and, that same night, he rode down from Shekarghur to Lahore, a distance of seventy or eighty miles, fording many swollen streams in his way. The ride was characteristic of the man, and was, in itself, likely to recommend him still more strongly to his future chief.

The task before Temple was delicate and difficult. Portions of the Report had been already written by Henry, portions also by John. The susceptibilities of Lord Dalhousie, as well as of each of the three members of the Board, had to be consulted, and this, as all alike were anxious to impress upon him, without the slightest sacrifice of truth. However, the task was accomplished, and in a manner which made its publication to be almost an epoch in the literary history of India. At all events, it was an epoch in the way in which that history could be regarded by outsiders. It is not too much to say that, before its appearance, no document of the kind had ever been read extensively, either in India or in England. Such reports as had been published were unreadable and almost unintelligible, thickly interlarded with Hindustani and Persian words, and the whole put together in the most forbidding shape. Temple thus proved to be the *vates sacer*, without whom much that the Lawrences had done might have remained unrecorded and unknown beyond the pigeon-holes of a Government office, or the limits of the province which was immediately affected.

Temple had done the Secretary's work, but he was not yet to be Secretary; and even when the Board was abolished and was succeeded by a Chief Commissioner, the Governor-General still refused

to sanction any change. In vain did John Lawrence write to Courtenay and to Lord Dalhousie, representing the vast amount of unnecessary work and worry which was thus thrown upon him, and begging that a Residency, or any other post which was suitable to his abilities, might be given to Melvill. In the period of the Board he had had to do much of the Secretary's work as well as his own. And now, to make matters worse, the offer which was made to Temple by Colvin of a high post at Agra, made it likely that the man on whom he had set his heart as his future Secretary, would, after all, be permanently withdrawn from the Punjab. He treated the matter, however, with characteristic magnanimity. 'Temple,' he wrote to Courtenay, 'is the man whom I have long wished for as Secretary in Melvill's room, if only I could have helped the latter to a snug berth. As I cannot do this, I hope the Governor-General will let Temple go; for it is hard to prevent an able man getting on, merely because one wants him oneself.' But the Governor-General peremptorily refused permission; and the death of Melvill, which happened soon afterwards—a man for whom John Lawrence had always felt a great regard, and had treated throughout with exemplary patience, and even tenderness—at last gave Temple the opening for which he was so well fitted.

It was in July, 1854, shortly before the severe attack of fever which I have described, that Temple arrived to enter on his work. What was said and done at the first meeting between the two men I am able to relate on the best authority, and it is highly characteristic. 'John Lawrence,' said Temple to me in conversation, 'was very ill with headache, lying down in a dark room, and much depressed. Hearing me enter the outer room, he called out abruptly, "So glad you are come; just look at those letters;" and said no more. In the afternoon he was better, and able to leave his room. "Very glad," he said, "to have got you in your proper place at last! I am glad of your opinion, and, of course, very glad of your pen; but remember, it will be *my* policy, and *my* views: not yours. Your day may come—it is mine now; every dog will have its day."' 'He seemed,' remarks Sir Richard Temple, 'to be unapproachably beyond me then, and so still he does; but, in one sense, his words came true, for I have filled offices similar to his since.'

And here, perhaps, I may fitly insert a letter which I have received from Sir Richard Temple, giving me some of his earliest impressions of his new chief:—

I essay, as requested by you, to note some among my recollections of John Lawrence's mode of conversing with those who were within his inner circle; though I cannot, in the space of a single letter, do anything like justice to the memory of my revered master.

It was one day in the first half of June, 1851, that I was introduced by George Barnes to John Lawrence, who was then living in a picturesquely situated house on the spur of Mount Jacko, in the centre of Simla. You can imagine the interest and curiosity with which I went to this, my first interview, with the man whose repute had left so deep an impression on the public mind, and at whose instance I had broken away from my comfortable anchorage in Hindustan and had embarked on a new career in the then unsettled Punjab. I had, in my imagination, pictured Lawrence as an iron-looking man, somewhat severe in tone and aspect, with a massive brow, straight features, and compressed lips, uttering few words, and those only of a dry and practical import. His conversation, I expected, would tend towards statecraft or political economy, and would proceed to the point and nothing but the point. Great was my surprise, then, on finding that he had an open countenance, an expansive forehead, a frank, genial bearing, and a vivacious manner of conversation. The lips, so far from being closely set, were parted constantly by smiles and laughter. The conversation turned on the state of the country between Simla and the Punjab, on the rainy season which was just setting in favourably for agriculture, and on the incidents of travel from the valley of the Sutlej to the heights of the Himalayas, as illustrative of the character of the country and the ways of the people. He was full of animation, and seemed anxious to make me feel at ease. It was only when the features occasionally relaxed, after the play of light and fancy during conversation, that I could perceive the full strength and solidity of his head, and the lines which anxious thought and energetic resolve had marked on his face. He concluded a somewhat diversified discourse by asking me one or two questions about my settlement work, and fixed a day on which I was to bring my papers for his inspection. During the several interviews I had with him afterwards regarding settlement work he displayed not only the strong grasp of economic facts, and the quick insight into elaborate statistics which might have been expected from his stirring antecedents, but also more of patience and quiet consideration than a young officer would ordinarily expect to receive from so eminent a superior.

Shortly afterwards, he told me that the Governor-General (Lord Dalhousie) had asked him to bring me with him to dine quietly at Government House; and, no other guests being present, I had a full opportunity of observing the two great men engaged in a discussion which fell upon the feudal tenures of the Cis-Sutlej States, then being settled by Government. Lord Dalhousie had the staid yet bland demeanour ordinarily associated with the statesman. Lawrence, though also self-possessed,

was full of animation and vivacity, urging with much earnestness some views which Lord Dalhousie did not seem wholly to accept. After dinner, they sat again conversing on a sofa. Lawrence was telling some of his own experiences, and Lord Dalhousie was listening with amused attention. I understood, at the time, that Lord Dalhousie used to praise Lawrence's official writings as being lifelike and as instantaneously conveying distinct ideas to the mind of the reader.

I know not how far the records at a biographer's disposal indicate the play of wit, the flight of fancy, the originality of illustration, the raciness of expression, the unpremeditated eloquence, which imparted a fragrance and flavour to Lawrence's intimate conversation with those who were constantly about him. These qualities were unfailing when he was, as it were, 'off duty,' however reserved or grave he might be when he was actually at work. He used largely the well-known method of illustration whereby the features of a country are described by metaphors drawn from human character, and, *vice versâ*, the disposition and temper of persons are set forth by analogies derived from the material world. Though he had not cultivated, and hardly appreciated, the more delicate points in landscape, or the tamer beauties of nature, yet if placed in any scene which was

'stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child,'

he would, at once, display something of the artist's sentiment and the poet's instinct. I have heard him describe the crossing of the Indus, the valley of Peshawur, the mouth of the Khyber Pass, the rocks of the Kohat defile, the floods of the Sutlej, the thunderstorms of the Himalayas, in brief, graphic, pithy—though perhaps rugged—sentences, which few men would surpass. He had a discriminating insight for all that related to animal life. He would allude in striking terms to the noteworthy creatures of the East—the elephant, the tiger, the deer, the buffalo, the eagle, the hawk. He regarded the live-stock of an Indian farm—the heifers, the steers, the lambs, the kids—with the affection of a true amateur. He had a sound knowledge of horse-breeding in India, whether in studs or in villages, and it used to be interesting to hear him criticise the colts and fillies, and discuss their build, nourishment, training, temper, and docility. It were superfluous to say, after his practice as a settlement officer, that he had an amount of discernment respecting the varieties of soil, the quality of growing crops, the effect of the weather upon the harvests, the merits and demerits of native husbandry, which has never been excelled by any Englishman in India. Nobody could ride with him across the fields in the busy season without deriving instruction as to what should be observed. It was a branch of his great profession to perceive at a glance the material condition of the natives of all ranks and callings. He was benevolently keen to note the signs of

poverty or distress in the humblest classes, whereon he would often dilate. It was interesting to walk with him through the rough lanes and alleys of a large village, and to hear his remarks regarding its strong and weak points, its capabilities and resources. Insight into human character being one of his foremost faculties, and the study of the native disposition in its practical aspect having been one of his first duties, his knowledge of Indian idiosyncrasies, as affecting the business of life, was comprehensive, without, perhaps, being what is commonly termed profound. To converse with him on these topics was to be introduced to a separate world of opinion and feeling. He did not indeed appear to have turned his attention towards the philosophical, ideal, and metaphysical phases of Hindu thought. But of the priestly and fanatical classes among Mohammedans he had a vivid and exact appreciation, which he would embody in forcible language.

Though not at all satirical or cynical, he delighted to mark good-humouredly the ridiculous side of everything. His intimate friends probably knew him to be a laughter-loving man to a degree little imagined, perhaps, by the outer world. He thoroughly acted, however, up to the maxim, '*dulce est desipere in loco.*' When on horseback, before the public, or in his office chair, he kept his humour quiet, but at meal-times, or after dinner, or in his walks, or when talking with his Secretary alone, he hardly touched upon anything without investing it with an air of pleasantry. As I look back through the vista of years to the time when I saw him constantly—from 1851 to 1859—his bright, gleaming talk, and the sparkle of his peculiar wit, seem to me like the ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα which the poet ascribes to the rippling expanse of ocean.

He had not kept up his college studies sufficiently to enable him to garnish his speeches with classical quotations, nor did he usually introduce matter derived from any English poet except Shakespeare; but Shakespearian expressions he would often use with marked emphasis. Many of his witticisms used to be drawn from the Persian tongue, of which he had acquired a competent rather than a scholarlike knowledge as a young man, while it was still the language of the courts and the State departments. He probably had but scant respect for the ornate images of that flowery language, and, by applying them to current events and common affairs, he often succeeded in causing a ludicrous effect. Conversely, he would sometimes produce a laughable travesty by free renderings from the Persian into English. When conversing with natives in the Hindustani vernacular, he would indulge in a vein of good-humoured banter, which would provoke them to actual laughter, despite their habitual abstinence from even smiling in the presence of their superiors.

In respect of graver and more general topics, he had not much of varied or miscellaneous reading. Whatever he read was of the best kind,

and was well assimilated into his mind. He eagerly perused Macaulay's chapters on Irish history. He was well acquainted with at least some of the Napoleonic campaigns, and of the Peninsular battles. He had given particular attention to Hannibal's invasion of Italy, and to Alexander's march to and from India. His predilection was to choose some political or military transaction in ancient or modern history, to examine it by the light of his own experience, and thus to pronounce a practical criticism. If time and opportunity admitted (which was, however, rarely the case) of a group of historical circumstances being comprehended, and of the map being spread out, then the listeners would be struck by the clearness of his insight into political combinations, and by the eye with which he was gifted for seeing the bearing of geographical or topographical points upon the events under consideration. In political economy, though he had not much studied the theoretical or technical branches, he evinced great aptitude for banking and public finance; also, as might be expected for all that related to the rent and tenure of land, especially tenant right. In works of fiction, his reading was not extensive. He would confine himself to novels of the best style, and the most established reputation. I have myself sometimes read out to him of an evening some of the finest passages in Walter Scott's novels. As his years advanced, an ever-increasing study of the Bible caused his language, when he was speaking of serious subjects, to be tinged, unconsciously to himself perhaps, with Scriptural phraseology.

Some may wonder why, with this natural power in conversation, he succeeded so little as an orator, and was, indeed, rather averse to public speaking. The cause was, perhaps, in this wise. In early life, and in the vigour of his days, he never had occasion to speak publicly in English; his speaking was in the Oriental languages among the natives in court-houses and public offices. During his later years, when occasions for addressing his countrymen came upon him thick and fast, he had begun to suffer from head symptoms which rendered him shy and diffident in any attempt at oratory. In the summer of 1854 he had a terrible head-ache, during the paroxysms of which he gasped out to me, 'I feel as if *rakshas*' (Hindu mythological giants) 'were driving prongs into my brain.' Afterwards, from time to time, he assured me that he had an affection of the head, which seemed like a 'current of air rushing through his brain.' Proof, indeed, of his 'unconquerable will' is to be found in the fact that when the service of his country demanded from him the utmost exertion of brain-power, he was often depressed by these distressing sensations in the very abode of the intellect. This often lowered his spirits; but when he felt better, the clouds would disperse, and his natural buoyancy and joy-ousness would re-assert themselves.

Owing to early habit, he was much more confident when publicly addressing natives in their vernacular. And he was one of the very few

Governors-General (if indeed he was not the only Governor-General) who repeatedly spoke long orations in Hindustani to native princes and nobles assembled in Durbars. I had not the happiness of seeing him during the closing years of his life. But, whatever his public utterances may or may not have been in England, I should think that, even up to the end, his conversation could not have failed to impress anyone with whom he was familiarly acquainted.

The relief given to the overworked Chief Commissioner by the appointment of Temple as his Secretary was instantaneous. Without it, he used often to say that he must soon have broken down altogether. Where, formerly, he would have been obliged to write out a document, or an answer to a letter, in full, if he wished it to be adequately done, he was now able,—as all hard-worked public men ought to be able,—to scribble down a line or two across it, and feel sure that his Secretary would catch his meaning, and express it in accurate and appropriate language. Temple's eagerness for work, and aptitude for getting through it, exactly suited him. They worked together in perfect harmony—harmony which could not fail sometimes to rouse the indignation or the anger of applicants for places, for which they were not judged to be fit, or of subordinates who, for some reason or other, had incurred the displeasure of their chief, and would not be satisfied without a personal interview. It might have been possible, they thought, to deal with the Chief Commissioner alone—for sometimes even the bull in the arena, after scattering his foes this way and that by his irresistible charge, received a sly or a disabling thrust from the least worthy of his assailants; but it was impossible to get over the two men together—the strong-fisted chief who knew his mind so clearly, and that 'detestable Secretary,' who sat there, not speaking a word himself, but catching the drift of all his chief's words and thoughts, and then writing them down in 'Templetonian' English.

Almost his first duty as Secretary to the Chief Commissioner was to draw up, in obedience to the orders of Government, a second Report of the progress made in the Punjab during the last two years. It necessarily had less of novelty in it than its predecessor, but alike in matter and in manner it was a worthy sequel to it; and, as a fitting conclusion to this chapter, I quote its concluding paragraphs, partly as a good specimen of its author's style, partly as an appreciative but strictly accurate statement of what the Chief Commissioner and his subordinates had already succeeded in doing in the new province:—

In short, while the remnants of a bygone aristocracy are passing from

the scene, not with precipitate ruin, but in a gradual and mitigated decline, on the other hand, the hardy yeoman, the strong-handed peasant, the thrifty trader, the enterprising capitalist, are rising up in a robust prosperity, to be the durable and reliable bulwarks of the power which protects and befriends them. Among all clases there is a greater regard for vested right, for ancestral property, for established principles. There is also an improved social morality; many barbarous customs are being eradicated, and the position of the female sex is better secured and respected. Among all ranks there is a thirst for knowledge, and an admiration for the achievements of practical science. But, irrespective of the framework of society, the external face of the country is rapidly changing, from the advance of vast public works, both for communication and irrigation; and if the old palatial residences are decaying, on the other hand, fine cantonments are everywhere springing up, and the public buildings, both civil and military, as regards size and architecture, are not surpassed at any stations in Upper India. The alteration is apparent in town no less than in country. The aspect of the streets is less gay and brilliant than before; but the improvements in drainage, in paving, in the laying out of bazaars, would prove to the commonest observer that an era of solid comfort and sanitary cleanliness had commenced.

The administrative operations undertaken in the Punjab have, in great measure, been designed by the light of experience in older provinces. The frontier is, perhaps, the most difficult in the Empire to defend. In the force and vigour of its police, in the simplicity and precision of its civil justice, and in the popularity of its municipal arrangements, the Punjab may challenge a comparison with any province in India. In other respects, the crusade against Dacoity, the suppression of Thuggi, the movement against infanticide, the tracking of criminals, the management and economy and salubrity of the jails, the productive results of prison labour, the elaboration of the revenue system, the field measurement, the training of village accountants, the registration of rights, the interior professional survey, the census of the population, the preparation of statistics, the construction of roads, bridges, and viaducts in the face of physical difficulties, the excavation of canals, the arrangements for the great highways, the erection of caravanserais and supply-depôts, the founding of dispensaries, the promulgation of educational schemes, the improvement in the breed of cattle, the planting of trees, the pursuit of agricultural science, the geological researches, and, lastly, the supervision of finance,—all these things, existing in the Punjab, may have had their prototypes and examples at different times and in different places, some in the North-Western Provinces, some in Bengal, some in the other Presidencies; but the Chief Commissioner almost ventures to think that in few provinces can a greater range and variety be pointed to within the short space of five years than in the Punjab. He can hardly hope for entire success in all that has been undertaken, but partial or occasional

failure will never have a discouraging effect. Where such failure has occurred, it has been portrayed with intended fidelity in the present Report. It is easier to design than commence, and easier to commence than to complete. No one can be more aware than the Chief Commissioner himself of the necessity for untiring perseverance for the perfecting of the many works which have been attempted in the Punjab.

What wonder that Lord Dalhousie acknowledged the Report in no ordinary official phraseology? On November 21, 1854, he writes thus:—

[*Private.*]

My dear Lawrence,—Your second Report has been printed, and I have just circulated it, with a Minute, in which I have endeavoured to do full justice (no easy matter) to the exertions and achievements of yourself and of the body of officers serving under you in the Punjab. The course of events was not, of course, unknown to me; but it is refreshing and invigorating to see the results presented in a collective form, and to mark the aggregate of progress and improvement which successive years secure. You are building, year by year, an honourable monument of your services, and I congratulate you upon it with the warmest cordiality, and with the most sincere regard. The Court of Directors, I hope, will be induced to print and circulate this Report, as they did its predecessor, with great effect.

Ever, my dear Lawrence, yours most sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

I have preferred, in this and the two following chapters, to dwell not so much on those evidences of moral and material advancement in the Punjab, to which the foregoing extracts principally refer, as on other and more personal features of John Lawrence's administration. It is these last which, as it appears to me, show us most of the man. In the chapter on 'The Work of the Punjab Board,' I have described at length the moral and material changes which the province owes to the Lawrences, and in these respects, as I have already pointed out, the work of the Chief Commissioner was one of expansion and of development, rather than a new departure. But it may be well once more here to remind the reader, that,—whether John Lawrence was making a progress through the Derajat, or was stationary in the Residency at Lahore, or in his three-roomed house at Murri; whether he was corresponding with Lord Dalhousie on matters of State; or was, to all appearance, absorbed in the details of some dispute between his subordinates,—his finger was always on the pulse of his province; that he felt, that he stimulated, that he controlled every throb and every movement within it, and that the great work of peaceful progress never slackened even for a single day.

CHAPTER XIV.

RELATIONS WITH HIS CHIEF AND HIS SUBORDINATES. 1854–1856.

THE almost exclusive attention which the Chief Commissioner had been able, during the first eighteen months of his rule, to give to the internal progress of the Punjab, had been interrupted, to some extent, during the last few months by the Crimean war and by the complications to which it was feared it might give rise on the north-western frontier. John Lawrence, as his letters show, had watched closely the steps which led up to that war, and to the intervention of England and France; and when Lord Dalhousie, in deference to the anxieties of the authorities at home, bade him, half humorously and half seriously, 'be on the look-out for Prince Menschikoff in the Khyber,' the warning was re-echoed by Herbert Edwardes, who recommended that immediate overtures should be made by us to the Ameer of Afghanistan for a treaty of alliance, and that we should furnish him with money and warlike materials. Lord Dalhousie was, at first, inclined to agree with Edwardes, but was strongly resisted by John Lawrence. A few extracts from his letters will show how, even at this early period, John Lawrence inclined towards that frontier policy which he ever afterwards advocated.

To Courtenay.

January 7, 1854.

I am looking out sharp towards Kabul. If the war continues, Russia will no doubt intrigue there. But intrigue can do little or nothing unless a Russo-Persian army invade Afghanistan. I see not what is on the cards. If such an invasion do take place it will unite the Afghans together against them. Let us only be strong on this side the passes, and we may laugh at all that goes on in Kabul. I would waste neither men nor money beyond. If the Persians attack the Turks we might make a diversion in the Persian Gulf, as Lord Auckland did some years ago, by occupying the island of Karrack, or some such name, and threatening a descent.

The letter which details his objections to Edwardes' proposal for an alliance with the Afghans, in the shape it then bore, is of more than passing interest.

Camp Subki, near Bunnoo ; March 24, 1854.

My dear Lord,—I have, this day, received from Edwardes a copy of his letter of the 20th to your Lordship. I do not coincide in his views on the conduct of Dost Mohammed Khan of Kabul since the last war. . . . I fully believe, however, that the Ameer is willing to be on terms of amity with us just now. It would greatly strengthen his position and the chances in favour of his sons being able to maintain themselves at his death. It would also enable him to turn his undivided attention to other quarters. Such friendly relations would, no doubt, be useful to us in tending to maintain the peace of the border ; but they are not essential. We can hold our own against all comers. The satisfaction that a treaty would give in England appears to me the strongest argument in favour of the measure.

There seems, however, to be nothing in the present aspect of affairs in Europe which should induce us to adopt the extreme measure of making overtures to the Ameer. I do not think that we could do this without loss of dignity and prestige both at Kabul and in India. All thinking men would say that it must, indeed, be a terrible crisis—Russia must be a frightful foe—when the Lords of the East—the English—backed by France and Turkey, hold out, in this fashion, the right hand of fellowship to Kabul ! We may satisfy ourselves, but we shall never satisfy others, that such a course is not dictated by a consciousness of weakness ; and this knowledge will induce the Ameer to make claims which to us are inadmissible. . . . By the last news from Europe I judge that Russia must succumb ; she cannot pretend to fight all Europe banded together against her. But supposing she does go to war, she will have full employment at home. Beyond intrigue she can attempt nothing in Central Asia. But such intrigues, Major Edwardes thinks, will only oblige the Ameer to turn to us. In that case, why not wait till he does ? . . .

Foujdar Khan is a man of character and ability, and a well-wisher of ours. I do not know a native who might be more safely entrusted with our views and objects than he. But I am not prepared to recommend that it is politic to send any native to Kabul with a message from the British Government. *I do not think that a European officer could go there with safety. The Ameer would no doubt deal fairly, but there are many who would be glad to destroy the Mission, if it were only to bring Dost Mohammed into disgrace.* . . .

I would simply recommend that we give the Ameer to understand, indirectly, that we are willing to forget the past and enter into friendly

relations, should he desire it. In the event of his making such proposals, a native gentleman, such as Foujdar Khan, might go to Jellalabad or Ali Musjid to meet and conduct his son to Peshawur, with whom the treaty might be concluded by your Lordship in person, if the time suited, or by such parties as you might name.

To Edwardes he wrote to much the same effect.

I do not think it will ever do for us to assume the initiative with the Ameer. We could not do so without loss both of prestige and dignity. It might also inflate the Dost's mind, and induce him to make unreasonable demands. I think also that we should not give him money; the faithful would give out that we paid '*khiraj*' (tax) to the Ameer, and the demands would be increasing. We tried that dodge in Persia when Sir John Malcolm went there, and again, at Herat; and the end in both cases was that they took our money, and then laughed at us. Depend on it, if real danger arise in Kabul, the Dost will come forward, especially if he sees that our aspect is friendly. The Dost, I anticipate, cannot live long, and this will be an additional reason for caution. His sons will, assuredly, not be able to maintain themselves.

Lord Dalhousie's reply of April 11 is also important, and I subjoin an extract from it:—

My dear Lawrence,—I have received your several letters. It is very true that a treaty with Kabul would not be binding any longer than the Ameer chose to observe it. It is very true that the Afghans are naturally enemies to Russia and Persia; it is very true that we spent a great deal of money at Herat to little profit; it is very true that, even if the Russians were in Afghanistan, we are able to keep them out of India,—all this is very true; nevertheless, my good friend, you may take my word for it that it is wise for us to have regard to public opinion beyond the Five Rivers, and that—regard being had to public opinion in other parts of the world—it is wise for us to make some exertion, and even some sacrifice, to obtain a *general* treaty with the Ameer, in the present aspect of the world's affairs. Wherefore I do not quite go with you when you lay down that, in no circumstances, should we make any move until a direct overture shall have been received from the Dost. However, it is unnecessary to discuss that question now, because the proposal of Nazir Khairullah, which Edwardes has demi-officially reported, raises every apparent probability that some letters will be received from the Dost. . . . The Maharaja (Duleep Sing) is here, and sails on the 19th. He has grown a good deal, speaks English well, has a good manner, and altogether will, I think, do us credit in England, if they do not spoil him there.

Yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

'Having said my say,' John Lawrence replied to this letter, 'on the proposed negotiations with Kabul, I am prepared, as in duty bound, to carry out your views with all my heart.' But Dost Mohammed did not, at once, respond to the advances made to him. Like a true Oriental, he considered haste unbecoming or impolitic, and John Lawrence was able to convince his chief as well as his lieutenant at Peshawur, who were both anxious for the alliance, that over-eagerness on their part might defeat the object which they had in view. His letters at this period, especially those to Courtenay, are rich in descriptions of the Afghan character.

Murri : May 6, 1854.

What you say about the treaty with the Dost is undeniable. It will just be a concession to parliamentary opinion. I only hope that we shall not make any real sacrifice to secure it. It would be a mistake to do so. It is mere folly of the Calcutta people to suppose that it would make the difference of a single man at Peshawur. It could, it should, make no difference. I laugh at all the Afghans and all their machinations. As Haji Baba would say, 'I spit on their fathers' beards.' But I should not consider it even more necessary to be on the alert against them after than before a treaty. When an Afghan intends and endeavours to deceive his enemy, he begins with promises and oaths ; he sends him the family Koran, and swears to the truth of his overtures. A treaty with the Ameer, so far as it would give assurance of our friendship, and so long as it was for his interest to maintain it, would have a tendency to keep the border quiet, but no more. All the fanatical villains in Kabul and the intervening lands would not abate one jot of their intrigues. If you gave the Ameer ten lacs of rupees per annum from this day forward, and he saw that he could gain more by joining against us, he would do so instantly. His hesitation and doubts would solely be as to the policy which it behoved him to pursue.

The Afghan is by nature independent and fickle. The country is poor and strong. An enemy remaining there will eat up its resources and incite the people against him. . . . My own opinion is, that no such invasion as I have supposed will occur in the present age. But should it take place, our money will be better employed in strengthening our position than in helping such a race as the Afghans to fight our battles.

On June 3 he writes :—

I dare say I am quite wrong in my views about a treaty with the Ameer. With the Governor-General, you [Courtenay], and Edwardes all of a different opinion, it would be very bumptious of me to stand out. But I cannot help thinking that if ever the Russians get to Herat we shall have to fight our battles with our own right hands. I do not see

clearly why the Afghans should side with us from motives of interest. Give what support we like in money, they could not defend their country so as to prevent the Russians overrunning and occupying it ; though, after this was effected, they might give immense annoyance. Kabul is much more assailable from the Herat side than from this. But we could go there to-morrow, with 10,000 men and a good commander, and hold it also. Not that I advocate such a measure, which would be most unwise. But, if we liked to spend a couple of millions annually on such an insane act, we could hold it.

Late in the autumn of 1854, the long-expected letter of the Ameer arrived—'a very humble and civil one,' as Lord Dalhousie calls it. In a subsequent letter, received in January, he proposed to send one of his sons to Jumrood to negotiate the treaty, and particularly begged that John Lawrence, the Englishman of whom he had heard so much, might come to meet him in person and act as the English representative. John Lawrence had been anxious to leave the whole credit which was likely to result from the conclusion of a treaty of which he did not wholly approve, to his friend the Commissioner of Peshawur, who had started the idea and approved of it thoroughly. But the request of the Dost left him, as Lord Dalhousie pointed out, no choice in the matter. He had to turn diplomatist for the nonce, and was able, by his skilful management of the negotiations and the successful conclusion of the treaty, to prove that diplomacy is not necessarily trickery, and that the diplomatist who uses words not to conceal his thoughts, but to express them in the most unmistakable manner, is quite as likely to gain his point—especially in dealing with Orientals who can always beat a European at the game of trickery—as the veriest Talleyrand or Metternich.

John Lawrence and his wife, after spending Christmas at Lahore, started for Peshawur, and, accompanied by Edwardes, by the two Chamberlains, and by an ample retinue, moved out from thence on March 18, to Jumrood, the advanced outpost of our dominions, in order that they might receive the heir-apparent to the Ameer of Afghanistan with becoming dignity. On the 20th, he was received in full Durbar in the cantonments at Peshawur ; and, on the morning of the 23rd, business began.

In the absence of Lord Dalhousie, who had been taken seriously ill at Galle and was obliged now to take a partial rest for some months at Ootacamund in the Neilgherries, the Chief Commissioner wrote full accounts of his proceedings to J. A. Dorin, the President

in Council at Calcutta ; and from these and other sources I gather a few personal touches and incidents of the negotiations which are worth preserving.

Gholam Hyder Khan, the son and representative of the great Ameer whom we had treated so ill, was a remarkable personage in more ways than one. He possessed considerable intelligence, and 'for an Afghan chief was very well informed.' He thought and spoke for himself, and was able to keep his followers under excellent control. He had been much in India, and, having been detained there as a prisoner during the Afghan war, had managed to make friends with several British officers, and he now prided himself on recalling the places or the things which he had seen during his travels. He recognised the Chamberlains, and treated them as old friends. He wore English shoes, rode on an English saddle, and was particularly pleased with an English sword and revolver which John Lawrence gave him. He walked through Major Edwardes' house and examined the pictures and furniture, pointing out such articles as he approved and explaining their merits to his Sirdars. He insisted on giving John Lawrence, in return for the sword and revolver, a favourite horse—he had probably discovered the weakness of his host for that animal—and when his host asked to be allowed to send it back, he replied that, in that case, he would shoot it. His chief personal characteristic was his extreme obesity, which made it difficult for him to ride or to bear any physical fatigue. 'He has weak eyes,' says John Lawrence, 'and wears goggles ; he cannot sleep at night, and is bled regularly every two months. He has to drink water frequently during our negotiations. He is only thirty-seven years of age, but the civil surgeon of the station, whom he called in to prescribe for him, says that his life is not worth six months' purchase, that he may die any day from apoplexy, and that in any case he cannot live long.' Yet he pressed for the insertion of his name in the treaty, as heir-apparent to his father, with as much earnestness as if he were counting upon a long life, or was foolish enough to hope that his recognition by the English would avail aught in the struggle for power and life which was sure to follow his father's death. Such were some of the characteristics of the man with whom the Chief Commissioner was to have so much intercourse during the next ten days.

It was arranged, on John Lawrence's proposition, that they should meet without *vakils*, personages 'who were only likely to make or

increase difficulties;' that the Chief Commissioner was to be accompanied by Edwardes only, and the heir-apparent by three or four of his most trusted Sirdars; and that the conferences should take place alternately in the Afghan camp and in the house of the Commissioner of Peshawur. I take from John Lawrence's letters the gist of some of the more interesting passages in the negotiations.

The Chief Commissioner began the conversation by saying that the Governor-General desired nothing but a treaty of mutual amity, but that, if the Dost desired more, his son had better state what his wishes were.

'We are brave and warlike, but we are very poor,' replied the heir-apparent; 'we shall offend the Russians and Persians by making a treaty with you, and we hope therefore that you will grant us something by way of *parwarish* (favour). With money, we are a match for anybody; without it, we can do little. Herat is one with us, but it is on the frontier of Persia, and is the highway of Russia. If the Persians and Russians attack it, as they probably will, will you stand unconcernedly aloof and say it's no business of yours?'

The Chief Commissioner replied that he did not anticipate any danger of the kind. We had made a treaty with Persia, which warned her not to attack the countries lying between herself and India; and as for the Russians, they had plenty to do in Europe, nor was it likely that we, who were fighting them there, would wish to see them attack the Afghans.

'Persia,' retorted Hyder Khan, 'adjoins Russia; she does not love Russia, but fears her, and must do her bidding. The Afghans, if united, as, by the blessing of God they now are, have nothing to fear from Persia, unless Russia join her. If Russia has really no designs on India, why does she attack Khokand? why has she seized Ak Musjid and cantonned her troops there?'

'We can always stop Persia,' replied the Chief Commissioner, 'by a counter-demonstration on her coast; and we do not wish to offend her needlessly by saying anything about Herat in the treaty.'

'Persia,' rejoined Hyder Khan, 'is not quite so considerate for your feelings as you appear to be of hers. I can show you a copy of a treaty she has proposed to make with us against you, if you should interfere in Afghanistan.'

'That,' said the Chief Commissioner, 'is mere talk on the part of Persia.'

'Yes,' said Hyder Khan, 'talk and insolence. But after Persia

and Afghanistan have for centuries plundered Hindustan, it is no wonder if Persia is alarmed at seeing such a revulsion of fortune as Hindustan flowing back, year by year, towards Khorassan. But we should like to know what you mean by Afghanistan—its present or its former limits?'

This was, of course, a feeler towards Peshawur, the place which John Lawrence himself, then and ever afterwards, thought a source of weakness to us. But his answer was decided. 'The present boundaries of Afghanistan are, of course, those which will be maintained. We have no desire to interfere in Afghanistan, nor will we allow you to interfere with us. Our only object in making a treaty is one of mutual assurance, so that the border tracts may be at peace, and agriculture and commerce flourish. Your ruler will get a larger revenue and will be better able to resist his enemies when he is assured on the side of Peshawur.'

'Yes,' said Hyder Khan, 'we shall have nothing to fear from our other enemies, if they are not helped by Russia. As for Bokhara, we have old scores to pay off on her, as you have. Has not the Shah of Bokhara slain Stoddart Sahib and Conolly Sahib? Has he not also killed some of my own relations? We will go and punish him. An Afghan compared to a Turcoman is like a wolf compared to a sheep.'

The Chief Commissioner hereupon assured his friend that we had no designs upon Afghanistan, but only desired her to be strong and independent. The interests of the two States were in fact identical; they were in one boat.

'Well, then,' replied Hyder Khan, with vivacity, 'if we are in one boat we must sink or swim together. Promise to assist us, or your successor may not know what you have said, and will stand aloof in the time of danger.' So ended the first interview.

On the following day, the question of Herat again came up, and John Lawrence again dwelt on our engagement with Persia.

'Herat,' Hyder Khan replied, 'is the right arm of Afghanistan. Look at his hand,'—pointing to the Commissioner of Peshawur's wounded hand; 'did it not grieve him to lose its use? Thus it would pain us to lose Herat. If it be attacked, we must go to its aid. If the treaty is to benefit us, Herat should be included.'

John Lawrence was not empowered, nor would he have wished, to yield the point, because of the complications it would certainly involve; but he offered to give in writing some extracts from

Edmonstone's letter of instructions, which would show what our wishes were on the matter; and Hyder Khan then yielded the point with a good grace.

The next question raised must have been interesting to the Chief Commissioner from a family as well as from a public point of view, for Mohammed Khan, to whom the Ameer requested us to restore his former fiefs, was the very man who had betrayed George Lawrence into the hands of the Sikhs under circumstances which even an Afghan would be likely to condemn.

'Mohammed Khan,' said the Chief Commissioner, 'had been degraded by the Sikhs themselves, and, at the time of our conquest of the Punjab, he was living more as a prisoner than a free man at Lahore. My brother, Sir Henry Lawrence, had treated him with the greatest honour and consideration, and had allowed him to return to his fiefs in Peshawur and Kohat. There he plotted against my elder brother, Colonel George Lawrence; and when that officer and his family, at the urgent entreaty of Mohammed Khan himself, sought an asylum at Kohat, he basely gave them up to the insurgents.'

At this point, Hyder Khan seized the Chief Commissioner's two hands and exclaimed, 'For God's sake say no more! spare me the repetition of my relative's treachery, which blackened the name of our whole race. Who does not know that the Khazwanis are called Khugwanis to this day because they gave protection to a *khuk* (wild pig) which their own sovereign hunted into their tents?' Another of the Sirdars cried out, 'There is not an Afghan who does not feel the disgrace which Sultan Mohammed Khan has cast on his nation. Hospitality is an Afghan virtue.'

Hyder Khan then gave up the point, remarking that he could say nothing in favour of his uncle, and had only broached the question at all under the pressure of Mohammed Khan's entreaties to the Ameer. The whole party seemed much relieved when the discussion passed on to the next clause.

Once more, Hyder Khan tried to get a promise of assistance, both in men and money, in case the Afghans should be attacked or threatened by Russia. But the Chief Commissioner stood firm, pointing out the likelihood of collision between English and Afghans, if the former ever entered the country. And the meeting broke up with the understanding that the Chief Commissioner should, when they next met, produce the draft of a treaty in accordance with the

course of the discussions. The draft, when produced, contained three short articles, by one of which the Ameer was to bind himself to be 'the friend of the friends and the enemy of the enemies of the East India Company,' while the English were not to pledge themselves to anything of the kind. Hyder Khan raised the obvious objection that the treaty was one-sided, and that the engagement ought to be reciprocal. But the Chief Commissioner replied that there was a vast difference between the two Governments; that we were content with our condition and had no desire to advance, while the Ameer admitted that he had ambitious views; that we had no enemies of whom we were in dread, while the Ameer was likely to be in continual collision with his; and that if we bound ourselves as he did, it would necessitate a constant interference in Afghan affairs, which would be as distasteful to the Afghans as to us. Seeing that the Chief Commissioner meant what he said, Hyder Khan intimated that he would comply with our wishes, though he did so with evident reluctance. He then retired with his counsellors—like a jury about to consider their verdict—into an adjoining room, and returned within an hour, with one or two slight but characteristic amendments to the draft treaty. The Ameer was to be styled, not the Ameer of Kabul, but the Wali of Kabul and those countries of Afghanistan which were in his possession; 'for Kabul,' remarked the Sirdar, 'was only a city, while Afghanistan was a large country, and Wali was the proper name for a supreme ruler, while an Ameer might be only one out of many.' This point was of course agreed to, as was the Sirdar's request that he should be allowed to sign the treaty on his own account. The business was now over, and the Sirdar took his leave—not, however, before the arrival of the Overland Mail, which enabled the Chief Commissioner to congratulate his Highness on the victory gained by Omar Pasha over the Russians at Eupatoria, an achievement which was welcomed as a happy omen for the new treaty!

On the morning of the 28th, at the special request of Gholam Hyder, a review of the English troops was held in his honour, and at seven A.M. on the 30th the treaty was signed, sealed, and delivered in full Durbar. It ran as follows:—

ARTICLE I.

Between the Honourable East India Company and His Highness the Ameer Dost Mohammed Khan, Wali of Kabul and of those countries of

Afghanistan now in his possession, and the heirs of the said Ameer, there shall be perpetual peace and friendship.

ARTICLE II.

The Honourable East India Company engages to respect those countries of Afghanistan now in His Highness's possession, and never to interfere therein.

ARTICLE III.

His Highness Ameer Dost Mohammed Khan, Wali of Kabul and of those countries of Afghanistan now in his possession, engages on his own part, and on the part of his heirs, to respect the territories of the Honourable East India Company, and never to interfere therein; and to be friend of the friends and enemy of the enemies of the Honourable East India Company.

Done at Peshawur, this thirtieth day of March, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five; corresponding with the eleventh day of Rujjub, one thousand two hundred and seventy-one, Hegira.

JOHN LAWRENCE,
Chief Commissioner of the Punjab.

GHOLAM HYDER,
Heir-Apparent,
As the Representative of the Ameer Dost Mohammed Khan, and in person on his own account as the Heir-Apparent.

Ratified by the Most Noble the Governor-General at Ootacamund, this first day of May, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five.

DALHOUSIE.

G. F. EDMONSTONE,
Secretary to the Government of India with the Governor-General.

On the last of March, Gholam Hyder took his leave for Afghanistan.

I leave Peshawur this evening (wrote the Chief Commissioner to Lord Dalhousie on April 2), having waited here till the Sirdar was safely out of British territory. Edwardes saw him last night comfortably pitched at the mouth of the Khyber. Lieutenant Turner escorted him this morning to its very edge. The Sirdar expressed himself perfectly satisfied with his reception and treatment since his arrival, and good reason there was for him to be so. For had he been the son of our Queen we could not have treated him more handsomely. He, literally, not only lived at our expense, but took away a round sum in money. We gave him a very good review, in which the troops showed well, and, in particular, the Artillery and European Infantry. He was especially struck with the latter. 'Ha! ha!' says he, turning to his followers; 'see how they

march! these are the *jan-i-jung* (soul of the battle). And certainly H.M.'s 24th did look splendid. People say that the Sirdar and his confidential men are highly pleased with the treaty, and that it is worth lacs of rupees to the Ameer, by securing him from his most dangerous foes, and thus enabling him to set his house in order and turn his attention to other quarters. I suspect it will not be long before he reduces the allowance of the Khyberees and others. The former gentry get 26,000 rupees per annum from him! . . . What the Afghans really set their heart on is the possession of Peshawur. They often spoke with deep regret of its loss, and their eyes quite lighted up when expatiating on its beauties. They said they hoped some day to deserve it by their good services to us. The Sirdar saw it was useless asking for it, so, like a wise man, said nothing. . . . On one occasion, he asked me if it was true that we only took eight lacs from the valley, for that the Sikhs got as much as fourteen. This, I told him, was correct; but that the Sikh system was very oppressive, and that we took as much as was fair and reasonable.

John Lawrence himself was not disposed to think more highly of the treaty now that it was concluded than he had done at first, nor did he lay much store by the part he had played in it. 'The treaty has been signed,' he wrote off to Nicholson as soon as it was over, 'and there is no harm in it. The Barukzais promise much and we little; still, they will get more out of us than we shall out of them, in the usual course of things.' And when, a little later in the year, Lord Dalhousie wrote to say that he intended to recommend him for some special honour in recognition of his services, he wrote back to Courtenay in reference to the subject: 'Nothing can be handsomer than the terms in which the Governor-General has offered to recommend me for honours. The treaty was certainly a lucky hit, and, no doubt, will be much thought of at home; but I like to think that if I deserve anything it is for my labours as a civil administrator.' It is hardly necessary to say that, in all his communications with the Governor-General, John Lawrence dwelt with special emphasis on Edwardes' services in connection with the treaty. 'Edwardes has given me the most cordial and able assistance throughout the negotiations; indeed, without his aid I should have had a difficult part to perform.'

The Chief Commissioner was now free to return to the ordinary work of his administration; and—what must have been specially pleasant amidst the many difficulties and vexations of his work—several of the old Punjabi school, who had been originally introduced

into the country by his brother Henry, and were his devoted followers, on returning to India from furlough, showed no backwardness to enrol themselves under his successor. Such was Edward Lake, who returned to the Trans-Sutlej territory, where John Lawrence had first known him; such was Reynell Taylor, the hero of Lukki, who, as Deputy-Commissioner of Kangra, was to do good service during the Mutiny, and was, afterwards, to return to the Marches, which he had, in a manner, already made his own, and of which he has proved a worthy warden almost ever since; such was Harry Lumsden, 'Barbarossa,' as John Lawrence calls him, who returned, in the following year, to the command of the splendid regiment of Guides which he had himself originally raised; such, too, was Neville Chamberlain, the chivalrous and high-souled soldier who had succeeded Hodgson, as Brigadier of the frontier force. Again and again, John Lawrence's delight and exultation at this last auspicious change breaks out, even in the midst of the driest details of his business letters, in words which have been more than justified by the long and brilliant career in India which has only just terminated. 'There is no man,' says John Lawrence to Neville Chamberlain himself, 'in the Bengal army whom I would so gladly see at the head of the Punjab force as yourself, and few for whom I have a greater regard and respect.' 'I know hardly any man,' he says to another friend, 'perhaps no one man, who commands so generally the esteem of his brother soldiers.'

Other able men, too, who could not exactly be said to belong to the school of either Lawrence, such as George Campbell, who has since then set his mark on various parts of India, and whose impressions of the 'extraordinary energy and ability' of his new chief I shall quote hereafter, now re-entered the Punjab. The regular troops at Peshawur, over whom John Lawrence had no direct control, fell into the hands of the man whom he had long worked to get there—Brigadier Sydney Cotton—a soldier to the backbone, as the outbreak of the Mutiny was to prove, though he had, up to that time, never heard a shot fired. 'By common consent,' John Lawrence had said, writing to the Governor-General, 'Cotton is one of the best soldiers we have had for a long time, and Peshawur is assuredly the place where we should have the best soldier going. There is not a doubt that he is the right man for the place.' It is now, too, that I find in his letters the first mention of an excellent soldier, whom he was shortly to employ on a perilous errand—Peter Lumsden, a younger brother of Harry, 'as fine a young fellow,' says the writer, 'as the Indian army ever produced.'

John Lawrence had thus succeeded, like his brother, in getting together a body of extraordinarily able men. But he soon found that it was much easier to get them than to keep them. Men with decided characters and strong wills, if—to use John Lawrence's favourite expression—they are to 'pull together in the team' at all, require a ruler who not only has superior authority, a still stronger will and still greater ability than any of them, but one who has also an almost inexhaustible supply of patience and forbearance, of tact and of discrimination of character. Now it is in these last qualities that, contrary to the usual opinion and in apparent contradiction also to the bluntness and directness of his manner, John Lawrence's letters show that he was pre-eminent. A lazy, or incapable, or shuffling, or unconscientious subordinate he would not stand. He elbowed him out of his way to another province as soon as possible. But if he recognised that the man, whatever his weaknesses, had 'stuff,' or 'grit,' or 'mettle,' in him, there was no amount of trouble that he would not take to help him, to humour him, and to retain him in the team. 'No one that I have ever known,' said Sir Richard Temple in conversation with me, 'was equal to him in this respect. He recognised that human nature was human nature—a compound of faults and virtues, merits and foibles. He would say of a man who had given him no end of trouble, "Never mind, he has got 'go,' he has got zeal;" he knew that a strong horse with a tight hand would do more work and better work, in the long run, than a weak horse to whom you might give his head. If he thought a man wanting in fibre of character, he would have nothing to do with him. The more complicated the machinery of the watch, the less he liked it, if the main-spring were wanting.'

Now, it is not too much to say that the year which followed the conclusion of the treaty with Afghanistan would have been abundantly employed if John Lawrence had had nothing else to do but to keep his team together. He managed to do so, and carried on also the ordinary work of the administration without slackening for an instant. No biography of John Lawrence would be complete, in my judgment, if it did not attempt, by full quotations from his letters, to give some general idea of the difficulties of this kind which came in his way, and of the methods by which he breasted or overcame them. And if it be objected that this side of his work and character cannot be brought out without giving to petty misunderstandings an importance which did not belong to them, and without laying bare the weak

points of some of his best friends, I answer that if the misunderstandings themselves were unimportant, the spirit in which he met them is far from being so, and that his efforts to satisfy the malcontents, or to reconcile opponents, so far from reflecting discredit on them, are a proof of what he considered to be their intrinsic worth. They show that, in his opinion, they possessed the 'grit,' the 'fibre,' the 'backbone,' in comparison with which all smaller failings were but as spots upon the sun. Sometimes, then, it was John Coke, the stiff-necked but splendid soldier, in civil and military charge of Kohat, who if he could not have his own way—could not, for instance, build a fort in the middle of a hostile tribe, or impose tribute on hill-men who dwelt beyond our borders—would throw down the gauntlet to his superior, the Commissioner of Peshawur, and, once in every few months, would write to John Lawrence, threatening to resign his post! Sometimes it was Robert Napier and the Engineers, whose expenditure John Lawrence had long striven, with very imperfect success, by protestations and entreaties, to keep within bounds, and whom he was now driven by the scarcity of money in the treasury, and by direct instructions from the Supreme Government, to bring to order by more efficacious means. Sometimes it was the arrears of Donald Macleod; sometimes the military justice of Edwardes; sometimes the fatal gravitation, as he thought it, of all alike—all except his dear friend Donald—towards the hills.

Take, as a sample, the case of Nicholson and Chamberlain. An incursion of the Musaod Wuzeeris had taken place and a native chieftain—Zeman Khan, the right hand of Nicholson—had been killed to the rear of the frontier posts, the guardians of which had, somehow or other, failed to come to the rescue. Nicholson wrote to the Chief Commissioner, reflecting bitterly on the force, of which Chamberlain was the head, and Chamberlain, naturally enough, as bitterly resented the imputation. And now began a battle royal, the attempt to allay which involved an expenditure on the part of the Chief Commissioner of many reams of paper, and of many hours of precious time. It was a triangular duel, in which the third man, who was attempting to play the part of peacemaker, had reason to feel that the Beatitude on the peacemakers did not promise peace of mind, in this world, to the peacemaker himself. Indeed, he often managed by his assiduous efforts only to direct the wrath of the principals in the quarrel upon himself. Sometimes, he would try the effect of a gentle yet a plain-spoken rebuke to each; sometimes, of an appeal

to their public spirit; sometimes, he would write to Nicholson on the extraordinary merits of Chamberlain, which so far outweighed his small failings, and, then, he would write in the same strain to Chamberlain respecting Nicholson; and, once again, by a happy stroke of Scotch or Irish humour, he would exorcise for the moment any angry feelings from the heart of his correspondent, and, by raising a laugh even on so serious a subject, would reduce it, for a moment, to its true proportions. Happily, he was able to vent his feelings and to pour out his griefs to his intimate friends, Robert Montgomery, Donald Macleod, and Herbert Edwardes, although the latter had a sufficiently serious quarrel of his own raging at the very same time with Coke. An extract from one of these letters, to begin with, will give some idea of the subject of dispute between Nicholson and Chamberlain, and of John Lawrence's attempts to reconcile them.

As to Coke, poor old fellow, I wish I could give him a Brigade and make him a K.C.B. . . . As for Chamberlain; I am grieved to think that he is vexed. I saw that such was the case, and did my best to soften the matter. He wanted me to pitch into Nicholson, which I could not well do. You know old 'Nick,' what a stern, uncompromising chap he is. He was frightfully aggravated at the death of Zeman Khan, and spoke out plainly—too plainly—about the cavalry in the posts. They were not to blame in this particular case, though the inference to be deduced from the fact that the plundered folk passed them and their posts, and went ten miles farther on was unfavourable to them. But the fact is that the detachments in the posts have done little or no good in the Derajat; they seldom come across the plunderers, and never yet, that I can remember, cut them up. I did not tell Chamberlain one-tenth of what Nicholson said, and much of which seemed to me to be true. I have written to him, begging that when he has complaints to make he will be more considerate and moderate in his tone. The detachments at the outposts do not effectually guard the border. This is the *gravamen* of Nicholson's charge. If they do so, surely Chamberlain can have no difficulty in showing it. If they do not, ought it not to be stated? Nicholson mentions four successive cases in which the freebooters got clear off.

I give next two extracts, one from a letter to Chamberlain in defence of Nicholson, the other to Nicholson in defence of Chamberlain, which will illustrate the skill and patience with which John Lawrence played the part of peacemaker.

Murri: May 25, 1855.

My dear Chamberlain,—Macpherson sent me your note of the 12th,

explaining your views and feelings on Nicholson's remarks regarding the detachment of the First Punjab Cavalry, as connected with the late affair in which Zeman Khan was killed. I assure you your note has given me much pain. There is no man in the Bengal army whom I would so gladly see at the head of the Punjab force as yourself, and few for whom I have a greater regard and respect. It is my sincere desire to consult your views and feelings in all matters connected with your command. I fully thought that my letter of the 2nd May (demi-official) would have satisfied you.

If I know myself at all, I believe I am one of the last men who would reflect unjustly or unreasonably on military men. I have passed all my service among them, and some of my best friends are of that cloth. I have no desire to support Nicholson unreasonably, and I freely admit that he does not write in as conciliatory a tone as is desirable. But he is thoroughly honest and straightforward, and, I feel sure, has no sinister views. What he desires is to see the frontier well protected. This, of course, cannot be effected unless the conduct of the detachment in charge of posts be criticised, when it may appear they have been in any way to blame. In the particular case in which Zeman Khan was killed they received no warning, and therefore Nicholson's censure was, so far, unjust. Still, the fact that they were not aware of the raid, and that the sufferers did not apply for assistance to them, gives some colour to the inference which he drew, that the people had not the proper confidence in them.

It did not appear to me that more was required than to send you his explanation. But as it appears that you still think that justice has not been dealt out in the case, suppose we have a court of inquiry to investigate the matter? If, then, it turn out that Nicholson has aspersed the cavalry, or, in short, said more than the case warranted, he must make the *amende*. I am sure he is too honest a fellow not to do so.

As regards yourself, I know that he looked forward to your return to the Punjab and assumption of the command with pleasure and confidence. Before it was known that you were to have the Brigadiership—that is, just after you went to the Cape—he asked me for my interest, in the event of its becoming vacant. I replied that, though you had never asked for my advocacy, I had voluntarily told you I should wish to see you get the command, and had reason to believe that the Governor-General intended giving it to you. Nicholson replied, by return of post, that he had not thought of your name, and that he would never think of being a candidate while you were available, as he believed you were much more fitted for the post than himself. Now, I think that a man who wrote and thought of you in this way would be the last to mean to asperse the force under your orders.

As for myself, I am ready to do whatever is just and right. I see by

your note to Macpherson that you wish to come to Murri for June. Pray do so. Let us then talk over the matter, and if I have not acted rightly towards you, I will admit it. If you cannot convince me of this, I will let Herbert Edwardes judge between us.

May 26.

My dear Nicholson,—I enclose you a letter from Edwardes, and another from Chamberlain to Edwardes regarding your remarks on that unfortunate affair in which poor Zeman Khan lost his life.

Chamberlain is very sore, and scruples not to say that he will resign unless the *amende* is made. I think he is somewhat unreasonable. Nevertheless his resignation would be a public loss, and bring much obloquy. I hope, therefore, that you will write and express your regret at having led me to conclude that the detachment in the post had received notice of the affair. I have written to you two or three times officially to send me the precise facts and dates of the four raids which you alluded to in reporting Zeman Khan's death. Pray send this without further delay, and in it express your regret at the mistake which occurred.

At one time, John Lawrence thought he had succeeded in reconciling the disputants, and congratulated himself and them most heartily upon it. But the storm burst out again with renewed violence, and the vexation of this and other worries, combined with a bad knee—which had incapacitated him for active exercise during many months past, and had driven him to write all his enormous correspondence with his leg in a horizontal position—seems, at times, to have driven him almost to desperation. Under such circumstances, he poured out his soul to Edwardes thus :—

June 22, 1855.

I will see what can be done about the fort at Abbottabad. But Napier has got his office and his work into almost inextricable confusion. What to do with him and them I know not. Government has threatened to stop all works not of an absolutely urgent nature, because he will not send in his returns. To add to my misery, Neville Chamberlain has again run rusty. He neither likes Nicholson's letter nor my explanatory justification. I do declare to you that, what with one thing and the other, I feel distracted, and very much wish I could cut the concern. As for the Governor-General, I hardly know what to think of him. Poor man, he seems very ill. He tells me he 'cannot walk across a room as smooth even as a billiard board.' To complete my miseries, my wife is ill in bed. She had rather a serious attack yesterday, but is better to-day. I enclose you Chamberlain's letter.

Under somewhat similar feelings, though about other people and other difficulties, he writes to Montgomery on May 17 :—

The real defect is in our officers themselves. I can only work with the tools Government gives me. I distribute them to the best of my ability, but I cannot infuse ability and force of character into them. As they say in your country and mine, 'blood is not to be got out of a turnip.' You say —— will do harm at Gogaira. He will do less harm there than at Dera Ghazi Khan. Will you tell me where to put him, and whom to send to Mooltan? I feel perfectly bewildered about the distribution of officers. To care for the interests and prejudices of men, and yet to further the public interest, is a riddle equal to that which the Sphinx propounded to Œdipus. I wish you would sit down and distribute the officers available in the way which you think would work well. I am nine short of my complement, and more are going away daily.

But John Lawrence's humour was able to throw some rays of light on the squabble even when it was at its darkest. For instance, on July 2 he writes to Edwardes :—

I return Nicholson's letter. I have got an official letter from Chamberlain, putting twenty queries on each of the four raids to Nicholson! Now, if anything will bring 'Nick' to his senses, it will be these queries. He will polish off a tribe in the most difficult fortress, or ride the border like 'belted Will' of former days; but one query in writing is often a stumper for a month or two. The 'pen-and-ink work,' as he calls it, 'does not suit him.'

To Nicholson himself he says on July 1 :—

I have got a long letter (official) from Chamberlain, who asks for replies, twenty in number, in respect of the raids you reported. If anything will shut your mouth, it will be these queries, for I often find it difficult to get an answer to *one*. However, if you can answer them all, and promptly, when replying to this letter, I shall be glad if you will express your regret that Chamberlain has been annoyed, and say you had no intention to reflect on the force. He is much too sensitive in such matters. Still, he is a fine fellow, and will do the force much good. Moreover, I should be much grieved if he went away in disgust, whether the cause was real or imaginary.

Five months later, Chamberlain was quite ready to forgive and forget, but the uncompromising 'Nick' still held out, and was still convinced that 'he did well to be angry.' John Lawrence was not slow to use the leverage upon him which Chamberlain's mood offered, and it only remains to be added that, after many a long day, the indefatigable peacemaker did reap the fruit of his labours; for he was able to make Chamberlain and Nicholson fast friends, to retain

them in the Punjab until the day of trial came, to send them down in succession to Delhi, where they were to do the work of heroes; and when Nicholson had received his death-wound, and was lying on his death-bed, it was Neville Chamberlain who tended and nursed him during the last terrible ten days of suffering with more than a brother's care. Upon the long struggles which had enabled him to retain two such men in the Punjab, that they might do such work in it and outside of it, John Lawrence must then, at all events, have looked back with unmixed pride and satisfaction; and it is, perhaps, worth my while, from that point of view alone, to have dwelt so long upon them.

I may end this part of my subject by quoting a letter or two written by John Lawrence to Major Coke, who was engaged in a double quarrel of his own with Chamberlain and Edwardes; and one or two also to Napier on the Engineer difficulty, which had now reached the acute stage. They will sufficiently explain themselves.

Murri: July 12, 1855.

My dear Coke,—I was very sorry to read your letter of the 9th, with its enclosures, for I see these discussions can only end in our losing you. It seems to me that you must have your own way in everything, or you will cut the concern! Now, considering that I hold you to be one of our best men, a credit, an honour, and a source of strength to the Punjab force, and, indeed, to the Administration generally, it gives me real pain to see the line you adopt. If you were the Brigadier yourself, you would insist on having your own way, and would adhere to your own views and policy. If this be the case, surely you should be prepared to admit those of Chamberlain.

The root of the mischief seems to be that he is a younger soldier than yourself. Had you enjoyed, early in life, the same opportunities of distinction that he did, your career would doubtless have been equally brilliant, equally successful. But such was not your fate. I do not think that, since you joined the Punjab force, you have really had much of which to complain. You got a fine command at once, and you succeeded shortly afterwards to the charge of a District, though you had received no training whatever. This gave you some little emolument and much influence and credit. You are, at this moment, the only officer on 800 miles of frontier who unites, in his own person, civil and military power!

No man in India, be his position what it may, can always have his own way. I, assuredly, have not. I am continually bending to this circumstance or that—giving in in this case, modifying my views in that. Much of my time is taken up in endeavouring to get men to pull together, in preventing fine fellows from falling out. Chamberlain may have his

defects, but I hardly know any man, perhaps no one man, who commands so generally the esteem of his brother officers. I think his selection for Brigadier of the Punjab force was universally deemed an excellent one. . . .

If you will listen to my advice—and it is that of a sincere friend—let Government decide the question; and remain quiet, and see what this war in the Crimea may bring forth. I may yet see you a Brigadier storming Russian battalions in Persia or Georgia. If you throw up your appointment in a huff, you cannot fail to injure your reputation and prospects.

As regards the public works, the simple fact is that we have been going too fast, and have exhausted the Treasury. Moreover, our executive officers carry on their work, and give us no accounts, no estimates, and no reports. In short, they have taken the bit into their own mouths, and, like wayward nags, have it all their own way. Now the getting them into order and replenishing the Treasuries will fall in together. I have resolved to act as the House of Commons does and stop the supplies until my wishes and views are carried out.

But these efforts at peacemaking were, at first, not more successful than had been his efforts in the Nicholson-Chamberlain case, and he writes again :

Murri : July 26, 1855.

My dear Coke,—I have two letters of yours as long as my arm to answer, and little time to do it; for I have more writing and reading than my eyes like or I can get through. You must forgive me when I say that I think you take an exaggerated and unjust view of matters. How can any work go on when a man says that unless he has his own way he will resign? But such is too often the burthen of your song. Go where you will, you cannot always have your own way. If you go home and get married, and sit by your fireside in your old age, do you think that you will then always have your own way? Believe me, my dear fellow, in all situations, in all circumstances, we must bear and forbear, and, to a certain extent, yield to circumstances. But the fault I find is that you cannot restrain your feelings, but must always, in every difference of opinion, tender your resignation, or tell us you are off. Such a line almost incites a man to resist you. It, as it were, challenges one to say 'No.' Brigadiers and Commissioners are placed in their posts to control commanding officers and magistrates, and may differ from them without thinking them either rogues or fools. If every case were brought to this alternative, no Government could go on. What would you say to some of your own subordinates telling you this?

As for Edwardes and Chamberlain, though I may not always agree with them, I think it would be difficult to find two finer fellows in their

way. See what an unreasonable fellow you are. If Edwardes was brusque and peremptory, you would consider him a brute; as he is conciliatory, he is an 'oily gammon.' Well, then, what must they think of you but as 'wayward and unreasonable' unless you have your own way?

You recollect what a row you got me into about the 'Kotul' affair. I do not say this to vex you, but had it not ended as it did, I should probably have been compelled to send in my *istifa* (resignation) also. Well, you desire to make war and conclude peace, to do this and modify that, and all off your own bat! Now no Government can stand this. No doubt you are often right, but not always; because, though thinking usually clearly and justly, you look at things too narrowly. You fancy all the world is reduced to the Kohat focus.

When you tell Chamberlain that you will have your own selection or resign, from that moment it becomes a struggle with you two for supremacy. This is the last thing that I would say to anyone who is above me. I would reason, argue, and expostulate; but the threat to resign is simply an *ultimatum*, which admits of no discussion. Then I think, as you yourself seem to admit, that you often urge your views and wishes too strongly. After having said your say and expressed your opinion, why reiterate it? You may not be able to take another view of the matter, but why not keep your view to yourself? why dogmatically and pertinaciously force your opinions on others? It is this defect which goes far to mar your real merits. . . . I have written you frankly and freely my sentiments, and I have done it as you have appealed to me.

It is pleasant to add that, here too, a *modus vivendi* was ultimately achieved by the Chief Commissioner's untiring tact and patience, and that Coke remained in the Punjab till he was sent down at the head of his splendid regiment to Delhi. Here he found full scope for his great military ability, and he has, all too tardily, in 1881, received, in recognition of his many services, the 'K.C.B.' which Sir John Lawrence would have been so glad to obtain for him in the midst of the Punjab troubles of 1855.

About the same time, the Engineer episode, as I have said, reached its turning point. 'Already the Department of Public Works,' says John Lawrence, on June 25, 'gives me more trouble and anxiety than all the rest of the Punjab. The Chief Engineer, with a hundred good and noble qualities, is no man of business.' Appreciating these hundred noble qualities, as well as the splendid works which Napier, while he had free scope, was carrying out, John Lawrence had hitherto forborne to do more than expostulate with him, and groan over his unbusiness-like procedure. But now, a

letter from Dorin, the President in Council during the absence of Lord Dalhousie, deploring the emptiness of the Public Treasury, no longer left him any choice in the matter; for an immediate and immense reduction of expense in the Public Works Department was judged to be imperatively necessary. The case had already been put tenderly before Napier by John Lawrence thus :—

Rawulpindi : April 25, 1855.

My dear Napier,—I have been thinking a good deal over what was said the other day about your department. It is a subject which has, for a long time, given me many anxious thoughts. I do not like the way in which things have gone on, and I have wished gradually but decidedly to work a change. This I have attempted by putting a *pench* (a twist or screw), so far as possible, on new undertakings when not absolutely necessary, and by calling for estimates and explanations where the work appears necessary, but the expense doubtful. I see that this system chafes and distresses you; that it causes you, to use your own words, 'to eat your own heart.' You had, as you say, formerly your full swing, and were allowed to do exactly as you liked. Now, you are brought up at every turn.

I must here say that I was always averse to that system, and endeavoured in the Board's time to enforce some check, and to secure the punctual rendering of accounts. I found that my endeavours were fruitless, and only caused a row between Henry and myself. So I gave it up.

I do not think that you have a more sincere friend than myself—not even in my brother. There is no man who more heartily wishes you well, or who would feel more grieved at misfortune happening to you. But, as regards public matters, both from principle and experience, I see the necessity of rule and system. I think much has been done in the Punjab in spite of neglecting these things; but I also believe that nearly as much would have been done, and at a less cost, by adhering to them. But, be this as it may, Government has laid down a regular code for our guidance in your department, and we are bound either to adhere to it, or to represent where it works badly and get it modified. We must not set it aside. If ever I ask you to give me a return, or to furnish information which is not necessary, or which I have no business with, you have only to point out the fact to ensure a remedy.

Nor did John Lawrence's letters on the subject to Lord Dalhousie show any trace of bitter feeling towards Napier. He was magnanimous throughout.

Murri : August 26, 1855.

My dear Lord,—I have delayed answering your Lordship's note of the

14th July, in the hope of being able to say something satisfactory about the Executive Department. A great deal has been done during the last two months towards bringing up arrears and getting things into order. And I have had several conversations with Napier, who has promised to do all I can desire. He is, of course, vexed at the turn matters have taken, and it is no easy matter to convince him that any reform is required. He is all for pushing on works or originating new ones. But he dislikes details and accounts of all kinds, and cannot find it in his heart to censure anyone under him. Indeed, his feelings incline him to defend anyone with whom one finds fault. He has, also, no proper idea of economy. As he naïvely observed last night, he had no idea that he could go on too fast, but supposed that Government might believe that enough was not being done, sufficient money not being spent.

Your Lordship may depend on my doing all I can to get things placed on a proper footing; and, if possible, I will do this without any explosion with Napier, for whom I have a great regard. He has the most decided aversion to estimates of all kinds, and considers that they are nothing but 'snares to entrap the Engineers.'

The following letter, though it shows that there had been a good deal of heart-burning on Napier's part, is creditable to both men :—

Murri : August 28, 1855.

My dear Napier,—I had intended writing you a few lines with reference to our conversation on Saturday, before I got your note yesterday; but I have had a heap of work to get through.

I must begin by saying, that I fully enter into your feelings, and am quite certain that you have not wished to act in opposition to my views. The difference of our official education, the difference in our idiosyncrasy, and the great latitude which you have hitherto enjoyed, lead us to take very different views of our duties and responsibilities. I have always wished to have a control over your Department in the Punjab, partly, because I considered it was required, but, mainly, because it seemed a mere matter of duty. But I really did not know how to effect this without giving you great offence. I went on at first, hoping and trusting that matters would mend, without, perhaps, acting as decidedly as I ought to have done.

For a long time, matters were left to your sole guidance. I knew that the accounts were generally in arrears, but I did not know that so many works were going on without valid authority, as has subsequently appeared to be the case. Had I received your indexes, progress reports, and similar returns with ordinary punctuality, I should have sooner seen the necessity for interference. Even when I first got your assignments I did not like to act; for I did not perceive from them what was the nature of the works for which the money was required, and which were and

which were not sanctioned. . . . It would be absurd for me to have authority in your Department and not to exercise it. I may have done this too abruptly, too harshly, but such is not my impression. From kindly feeling to yourself, from mere motives of expediency, I have endeavoured to get you to bring your department into order. If 'revolutions are not to be effected by rose-water,' neither are reforms to be made without vigorous expression, without conveying to subordinate authorities in unmistakable but courteous language that one's wishes must be carried out.

You say that I speak very differently from the style of the official letters which are issued under my orders. Perhaps there is much truth in this remark, but the fact is that, being by nature passionate, I place, as far as I can, a guard over my conversation. Being also sincerely desirous not to hurt your feelings, and being affected to a considerable degree by the influence of your own courteous and conciliatory demeanour, I may have led you to think that I felt less strongly than I really did on the shortcomings (in my mind) of your Department. . . . . You must forgive me if I have said aught in this to distress you. I assure you that it is meant kindly.

An extract from a despatch written by Lord Canning to Sir Charles Wood, some time after the suppression of the Mutiny, furnishes an unintentional but a very interesting *ex post facto* commentary on the foregoing correspondence.

Camp, Hoshiarpore, on the Lahore and Peshawur Road, March 30, 1860.

On my late journey to and from Peshawur, the subject of the road to that frontier station from Lahore necessarily engaged much of my attention. This road was begun, as you are aware, soon after the annexation of the Punjab. The utter inadequacy of the original rough estimates indicates that it was commenced under an imperfect appreciation of the difficulties to be surmounted. The work advanced for some years with the free expenditure, but also with the vigour and ability that usually characterised the projects of Sir Robert Napier. . . . My impression before traversing this road was that the expenditure in its construction had been somewhat reckless. This impression has been a good deal modified by personal inspection of the work.

Doubtless, the vigour with which work was begun and carried on between 1851 and 1856 in a country where nearly all skilled labour was a novelty, and where wheeled carriages were almost unknown, was accompanied by a large expenditure, while the scale and solidity of the road embankments, and the high class of gradients adopted, 3 in 100, aimed, at once, at a more costly perfection than we may judge to have been wise, now that the magnitude of the undertaking, the length of time required

for its completion, and the consequent liability to interruption by failure of funds, are fully appreciated. But without shutting my eyes to this, I must also admit that, at that time, the whole spirit of the Government tended rather to stimulate than check vigorous progress with too little regard to calculations of cost. And, little as I desire to tolerate any recurrence to this system of wholesale working without proper estimates, I am not indisposed to the belief which some have entertained, that this large and energetic development of labour, and the expenditure by which it was accompanied on this and other great works in the Punjab, under Sir Robert Napier's advice and general direction, was one, at least, of the elements which impressed the most manly race in India with the vigour and beneficence of British rule, and, under Providence, tended, through the maintenance of order and active loyalty in the Punjab, to the recovery of Hindustan.

I have dwelt at considerable—perhaps some of my readers may think at unnecessary—length on the efforts which John Lawrence made to 'keep his team together,' and on the success, remarkable enough when we remember the men with whom he had to deal, which attended them. I have already given my reasons for so doing. Such efforts were of the very essence of the man and of his work. Without them, it is hardly necessary to point out how different would have been the condition of the Punjab a few years later when the Mutiny broke out. Instead of being officered by men who knew their work, their people and their chiefs, almost as they knew themselves, it would have been officered by men who, from no fault of their own, could have known little of either, and the newly annexed province must then have been a chief source of anxiety instead of our firm support. That the Punjab was wide enough and elastic enough to hold men like Nicholson, like Chamberlain, like Coke, like Napier, and a host of others, was due, as the correspondence I have quoted at such length will show, to the Chief Commissioner, and the Chief Commissioner alone.

And not less remarkable than the way in which John Lawrence dealt with his subordinates was the way in which, without sacrificing an *iota* of principle, or ever using his words to conceal his thoughts, he managed to work harmoniously throughout with the eminent man who was at the head of the Government. How was it that he was able to do so? The question does not admit of an altogether easy answer, nor of an answer at all without a closer consideration than I have hitherto been led to give to the character of one of the most commanding Governors-General who have ruled India.

In spite of the great gifts which it is to be hoped that this biography has brought into sufficient prominence, or rather, perhaps, because of them, Lord Dalhousie had certain faults, which may have been equally observable. He was proud, ambitious, and imperious. He would crush anyone who disobeyed or thwarted him, anyone who seemed disposed to encroach upon his authority. In such cases, he had no bowels of compassion. 'He put his foot down,' was one favourite expression used by John Lawrence about his chief, when he had been aroused by any untimely show of independence. 'He met my request by an imperial "No,"' was another. 'The Lord Sahib is a pepper-pot,' said John Peter Grant, one of the ablest of his subordinates. The higher the position or the dignity of the man or body of men who kicked against the pricks, the more vigorously were the pricks applied. It was said of him that while he spared humble Deputy Collectors, and let them off easily, he had no mercy on Boards and Commissioners and Chiefs. How he had dealt with Lord Gough, with Henry Lawrence, and with Henry Lawrence's self-reliant assistants in the Punjab, during his early days as Governor-General, I have shown in previous chapters. His letters of rebuke, in such cases, were as clear and polished as steel. If, therefore, there was very much in him to admire, there was, in my opinion, not so much to love. In particular, he was deficient in one quality, without which no man, however able, can stand quite in the front rank of the rulers of men. He was deficient in the sympathy of the imagination. I do not here refer to that moral sensibility which is more or less common to humanity at large, which disposes men to rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep, and which, if a man be of any finer mould, makes him feel the pain that he is driven to inflict on a high-minded subordinate, at least as acutely as if it were inflicted by others on himself. For, in this, Lord Dalhousie was, by no means, deficient. A soldier's son—for his father had been Commander-in-Chief in India—he burst into tears when he heard that the 14th Dragoons had run away at Chillianwallah. He wept as he read to Sir Frederick Halliday the accounts he had received of the murder of Agnew and Anderson at Mooltan, and he burst into a perfect flood of tears, again, when he saw the same trusted subordinate for the first time after the death of the wife whom he had loved most tenderly, and who had died of the effects of sea-sickness just as she came in sight of the English shore. When the news of Lady Dalhousie's death first reached him, he shut himself up for weeks in

Government House, refusing to see anyone whom it was not absolutely necessary that he should see, but conscientiously and pathetically transacting all the business of the Government on paper, as well as he had ever done. His letters to Henry Lawrence during his anxiety about his brother and sister, who were prisoners in the hands of the Sikhs, are full of earnest and respectful sympathy; while his letters to John Lawrence show from first to last, and in an ever-increasing degree, the most tender and affectionate interest in his welfare. Nor were there any members of his personal staff who could not mention incidents showing his kind and thoughtful consideration for them. They were, many of them, devoted to him; and the few words that he managed to speak, or the few lines that he managed to write, in the midst of his press of work, showing his appreciation of their services, to officers at a distance who would not have naturally expected any such special recognition from the 'Lord Sahib,' were always treasured up, in their memories or their desks, as a lifelong possession. Nothing, therefore, that I am about to say implies that he was wanting in genuine kindness of heart, or in what is ordinarily called sympathy.

It was rather in that much wider and rarer kind of sympathy which is as much intellectual as moral, and depends mainly on the vividness of the imagination, that such defects as Lord Dalhousie had, appear to me to have lain. Lord Dalhousie seems, from his letters, many scores of which lie before me, to have been unable to clothe himself sufficiently with the feelings, the prejudices, the aspirations, the ideas of those over whom he ruled; and he was unable therefore to understand how the natives of India, recognising, as many of them did, the general benevolence of our intentions and the undoubted beneficence of our rule, were yet disposed to look back, with yearning and with regret, on the days when, if they were oppressed, plundered, murdered, they were so by men of their own race, their own language, or their own creed. He was unable, again as it appears to me, to picture to himself the *cumulative* effect upon the native mind of the policy of annexation which he had openly avowed, and of the numerous additions to the empire, justifiable or otherwise, which, in accordance with it, circumstances had forced on him, or he on circumstances. In particular, I doubt whether he thought that the shock given to the religious feelings and the immemorial customs of the people by the blows which he struck at the sacred right of adoption, were deserving of any serious regard on

the part of an enlightened English ruler. Nor is there in the whole of his letters, brilliant and incisive and racy as they all are, a single sentence which inclines the reader to pause and say, as he does, again and again, when he is reading the much less brilliant and incisive letters of Metcalfe or Outram, of Henry or John Lawrence, 'Here is a man whose chief claim to rule India was that he so thoroughly understood her people.' If, therefore, there have been no abler, or more commanding, or more conscientious, or more successful Governors-General of India than Lord Dalhousie, there have been, in my opinion, Governors-General who were more sympathetic with the natives, and more beloved.

He was, however, in every way a man of commanding powers. His faults, such as they were, were those not of a small, but of a truly great man. Small, almost to insignificance, in stature, he had a mighty spirit. Weak in health, he did more than the work of the very strongest man. Afflicted with a constitutional disease, which made it a torture to him even to put on his clothes, which often confined him to his room, and disabled him from walking across it even when it was 'as level as a billiard-table,' he yet traversed India from end to end, saw everything with his own eyes, and discharged every duty of his high office, that office which 'ennobles and kills' its holders, during the almost unprecedented term of eight years with a thoroughness, a promptitude, a precision, and a dignity in which he has had few equals. His work connected with the Punjab alone might have been thought enough to occupy the energies of any ordinarily able man. Again and again, as we read his correspondence with the Lawrence brothers, and note the view, alike comprehensive and minute, which he was able to take of every incident and character on the Punjab stage, filled as it was by able men, each of whom, in his time, played many parts, we can hardly bring ourselves to believe that the new province was but a fraction of his whole field of duty, and that he was directly responsible, during a part of his eight years, for some five or six other provinces which he had annexed, as well as for the ponderous charge which had been originally committed to him, and which, as he says himself, had overtaxed and overburdened the greatest of his predecessors. In short, if he was not a Heaven-sent, he was, at least, a born ruler of men. If he was ambitious, his ambition was that of Cæsar. There was little that was personal and nothing that was ignoble about it. He was every inch a king. He felt that he could rule, and that, with a view to the happiness of the millions entrusted to him, it was right that he should do so.

John Lawrence was a man, in his way, of quite as commanding powers, and of quite as masterful a will, as Lord Dalhousie. He was therefore the last man whom we should have expected, beforehand, to get on well with him as a subordinate. But we are now, perhaps, more in a position to see how it was that he did so.

The Punjab, John Lawrence's charge, was Lord Dalhousie's pet province. It was his own child, his own creation. John Lawrence might be its Chief Commissioner, but woe be to him if he ever forgot that he was not its supreme ruler! If he ever did forget this, and if, acting on his own responsibility, he invited a friend to serve within its sacred precincts, or became involved in a frontier disturbance beyond them, without first applying to the Governor-General, he too was called to account, and felt what might be the weight of Lord Dalhousie's heel. But here his tact and his loyalty to superior authority came in. His notions of duty to Government he carried to a degree which one might have expected to find in a disciple of Hobbes, but hardly in a man of such popular sympathies and of such commanding powers as his. It was these notions of public duty which helped him to put up with occasional rebukes from his chief, which, if they had come from any other quarter, would have made him turn and rend his assailant. But Lord Dalhousie was much too great a man not to wish his subordinates to speak their minds frankly to him. This John Lawrence always did. There was not a step which Lord Dalhousie took in the Punjab, not an appointment he made, not an expression he dropped, which John Lawrence, if he was unable to approve of it, did not, with all his 'heroic simplicity,' fasten upon and controvert. This done, if he could not succeed in modifying his chief's views, he thought himself not only at liberty, but bound in honour to carry them out. And it was this mixture of resistance and of submission, of loyalty and of tact, and yet of plainness or even abruptness of speech, which, combined with his other and infinitely greater qualities, exactly suited Lord Dalhousie, and enabled two such master spirits, if I have read their characters and correspondence aright, to move, in the same sphere, with mutual appreciation, and without coming into anything like dangerous collision.

The feelings of regard, respect, and admiration, which John Lawrence's character had early awakened in Lord Dalhousie, soon developed into a warm and brotherly affection. There was a general agreement in policy between the two men, but with a sufficient amount of difference to give piquancy and interest in life to all their

communications. Only on one occasion, in the whole correspondence, does John Lawrence seem to have taken seriously to heart anything which was said to him by his chief. He had objected strongly to the appointment of a certain civilian to a post for which he did not think him fitted, and the Governor-General said to him in reply, good-humouredly, 'You know, John, you are a good hater.' Misunderstanding, as it would seem, the meaning of the term, and thinking, in the innocency of his heart, that Lord Dalhousie meant more than he said, John Lawrence wrote back earnestly protesting against the imputation. His letter is highly characteristic, as is also Lord Dalhousie's reply.

April 21, 1855.

My dear Lord,— . . . I cannot but express my regret that your Lordship should have reason to think me a good hater. If I am any judge of my own character, I should not say that such is the case. I do not know a man in the world against whom I have such feelings. There are public officers both here and elsewhere of whom I have a mean opinion; there are several in the Punjab whom I have felt it my duty to report; but I know not one whom I would wish to injure personally. Every public officer whom I have considered inefficient, no doubt hates me, and thinks that I hate him. This is quite natural. I know that I have strong and decided opinions, which, when the occasion required it, I have seldom hesitated to state, with little reservation. But this I have felt to be my duty, a necessity of my position, if I wished to see the administration successful. In such instances, I have spared neither the man I liked, nor those for whom I have no such feeling; and in making recommendations for promotions it has been my earnest desire to be impartial.

Lord Dalhousie replied as follows :—

May 14, 1855.

My dear Lawrence,— . . . You seem hurt at what I said, and express your belief that you have not acted unjustly towards ——, and are incapable of doing so towards any man.

If you will be so good as to look back to my letter of March 28, you will see that I did not allege injustice on your part, either generally or in this particular case. On the contrary, I expressly stated, 'I have no reason to suppose that you have been unjust to this man.'

You protest against my supposing you hated ——, or that you are a 'good hater.' On these points, my good friend, I can't retract. I remember the grounds of your opposition to his appointment in 1849, and the feeling you showed towards him then.

As for the general proposition, you admit that you have strong and decided opinions which you have seldom hesitated to express without

reservation. Just so; and it is in entertaining and retaining such decided adverse opinions that consists what I, and Dr. Johnson before me, called a 'good hater.' But saying that you are 'a good hater' does not imply that you are partial or unjust, any more than saying (as I might say) that you are a staunch friend would imply that you are unfair and practise favouritism.

But Lord Dalhousie's long term of office, with its brilliant achievements in peace and war, its unexampled 'progress, moral and material,' its railways and its electric telegraphs, its conquest and its annexations, was now drawing to its close; and that it was so, the ablest of his lieutenants must have been, half pleasantly, half painfully, reminded by the letter which, in view of their approaching separation, was written to him by his chief:—

Ootacamund: May 1, 1855.

My dear John,—Your treaty arrived yesterday, and I lose no time in expressing to you the great gratification with which I have looked upon it in its complete form, and in acknowledging the obligations under which you have laid me by the successful conclusion of a treaty which I conceive will be regarded as of much importance both in India and in England, and which, consequently, will be viewed as honourable to my administration. I have recorded my opinions and feelings in language strong and sincere, and I hope that you and your coadjutor will feel that the Government has really appreciated your exertions, and has wished to do full justice to your services.

The additional claim which you have thus established to the approbation of the Crown and my personal gratitude renders this a fitting moment for asking you a question which my approaching relinquishment of the office of Governor-General would not have allowed me to delay much longer.

Your services in India have been so pre-eminent, that you cannot fail to be conscious of the fact, or entertain a doubt of my feeling it to be as much a personal duty as a personal pleasure to obtain for you some fitting recognition of your merits by the grant of honours from the Crown.

The question which I have to ask you is as to the form in which such honours would be most acceptable to you—whether you would prefer the grant of a baronetcy or the star of a Knight Commander of the Bath. The former is, so far, a higher honour that it is hereditary, but many persons would question the advantage of that quality in it, unless ample fortune could be handed down with the honour.

Whichever you shall prefer, it shall be my most earnest duty and endeavour to obtain for you before I leave India. You know, of course, that I cannot *guarantee* your getting either. But I can assure you of my

resolution to move heaven and earth to accomplish your wishes for you, and I think they can hardly refuse it to your claims and my solicitations.

Always, my dear John, very sincerely yours,

DALHOUSIE.

A letter which John Lawrence wrote on this subject to his intimate friend, Herbert Edwardes, before giving the answer to Lord Dalhousie which he had already pretty well made up his mind to give, is of biographical interest.

Murri: May 24, 1855.

My dear Edwardes,—I enclose a letter which I received from the Governor-General this morning. I hope he will not forget 'my coadjutor' when asking for honours for me. I may say with perfect truth that I consider you deserve at least as much, if not more, for the late treaty than I do.

My main object, however, in writing to you is to ask your advice as to the answer I should give. My chief pleasure in obtaining any honours is the pleasure I shall give to my sweet wife; though I would not have liked to have gone home and retired from public life without some acknowledgment of my services. The point is, whether to select the baronetcy or the K.C.B. My wife is inclined to the former as the greater honour, though she will no doubt be satisfied with my choice. I am inclined to prefer the 'star,' for the reasons to which the Governor-General points. I have no fortune to give my son; and anything which I may leave, I should feel it a sacred duty to divide among all my children. Now a poor, I may say a moneyless baronet, would be a sad figure. The honour might be some incentive to exertion, though not a good one. I rather fear it might prove an inducement to look to others rather than oneself for success. Kindly give me your advice on this point by return of post. I cannot conclude this note without saying that in fighting to get you made Commissioner of Peshawur, it turns out that, like the bandy-legged smith in the 'Maid of Perth,' I was fighting for my own hand.

His letter to Lord Dalhousie was to a similar effect, and once more the Governor-General replied.

June 26, 1855.

My dear Lawrence,—I received yesterday your letter of the 1st inst. I repeat my assurance that I will do my best to obtain for you the K.C.B. before I leave India. I cannot think it possible that I can fail in such an attempt; for no man has won it more fairly or deserved it better than yourself.

I think you have done quite wisely in preferring it to the baronetcy.

My letters from England give me no clue to the name of my successor. Indeed, they do not know it themselves; and the present Government are afraid to select, in their present infirm condition.

My wooden leg is rather better of late. How is yours coming on?

Ever yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

The name of Lord Dalhousie's successor was known in India very shortly after this letter was written, and it is the name of a man never to be mentioned by Englishmen except with feelings of gratitude and veneration. But his gifts were of a widely different kind from Lord Dalhousie's, and no one, probably, could estimate more accurately the immense loss that Lord Dalhousie, whatever the excellence of his successor, would be to India, than his chief lieutenant. The following letter brings out his feelings on the subject clearly enough :—

Murri: August 28, 1855.

My dear Lord,—I am glad to hear your Lordship thinks we shall like Lord Canning, and I hope he will be satisfied with us. Still I must say that your Lordship's loss will be sincerely felt. A stimulus has been given to the general administration of India, and a general vigour infused into all departments, which, if only carried on, must wipe out the reproach under which the Government formerly laboured.

To myself, personally, the change will be great. I can hardly expect to have so kind, so considerate, and so friendly a master. As one grows in years, one feels almost a disinclination to form new relations, even on the public account. Much of the work in the Punjab is both delicate and difficult. The Administration requires both vigour and judgment. The chief officer has to control a large body of his countrymen, drawn from different professions and educated in various schools. He possesses little prestige, and no power but what he derives from his own character. Do what he will, he must, to a great extent, depend on the view which may be taken of his conduct by those at a distance.

To your Lordship the return to your own country will probably be a subject of unmixed pleasure, but to the friends you leave behind, among whom I am one of the sincerest, it cannot fail to be a cause of real regret.

The approaching change must have been still more vividly brought home to John Lawrence by a letter which invited him to pay a farewell visit to his chief at Calcutta and be introduced to his successor.

The Neilgherries: September 26, 1855.

You will have learnt, by this time, that it is not true that Lord Canning

is coming out immediately. He will come when I want to be relieved. This will be either February 1 or March 1; probably the latter.

I do not doubt, in the smallest degree, your receiving his full confidence and cordial support in the important office you hold. Of course, you cannot be altogether on the same terms you have been with me during the years of close personal acquaintance and regard which we have enjoyed together. But soon that may come. And that it may come the sooner, I should be very glad if circumstances would admit of your running down to Calcutta to pay me a parting visit, and to become personally known to Lord Canning before my departure. I hope, too, to invest you with the K.C.B. at that time.

Such an arrangement would be a real pleasure to me, and would be, I am sure, of public value with reference to the future. You and I both know well the efficiency of personal intercourse.

For myself, I look forward to my return to Scotland with very different feelings from those with which I once did. If I wish to leave India, it is mainly because I feel I am no longer in a condition to serve her as I ought to do. I feel I could do much for her were I in vigour; and I regret, for her sake as well as for my own, to surrender the opportunity.

Of all from whom I part in India, there is not one from whom I shall sever myself with more sincere regret than from yourself, my dear John; and I hope that our friendship will be still maintained, though with a wider interval between us. I have not been well of late, and I rather dread the last three months in Calcutta; but I expect to be there at the end of November.

Ever yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

In the intermediate autumn John Lawrence had hoped to pay his long-intended and often postponed visit to Cashmere: but it was, once more, put off by the serious illness of his wife, and by the strong probability that she would be obliged to return to England. 'My wife is very unwell, and the doctors say *must go home this year*. This has bothered me a good deal, and I don't like leaving her even for a time, as we must be separated so soon. . . . I should not mind going too, but, with seven children, cannot afford to do so. Sometimes, I think of taking her to Cashmere, at other times, of giving up this trip and staying here (Murri) until it be cool enough to take her down.' Happily his wife rallied, and the thought of separation was given up for the time. In November, he and she went into camp, as usual, for the winter months; but the rough life, the heat of the tents by day, and the cold by night were too much for her. She was taken so ill on the way down to Lahore that they were

obliged to stop at a small police station on the wayside—the only cover that could be got—for some twenty days, ten of them at Gukkur, and ten near Gujeranwalla. Again the doctors urged that she should return to England, and, during her illness, her passage was taken, and all arrangements made for her departure. But, on her partial recovery, she again rebelled, and declaring that if she was not equal to Indian life with her husband, much less would she be equal to English life without him, she, once again, won the day. It was a happy thing for her and for her husband that she did so. Had she not stood firm, the most faithful of wives would have been absent from her husband during the greatest crisis of his life, the Indian Mutiny. She would have heard much of what he did, for all England and all India were ringing with his praises. But she would have heard and not seen. Instead of an interval of only thirty miles, which, in case of necessity, he or she could have traversed in a night, seven thousand miles of ocean would have rolled between them; and now that his deedful life is over, almost the only blank in the united happiness of the most happy of married lives would have been the very two years in which each would have given most to have been within hail of the other, to have been able to share in company the extremity of the peril and so to have doubled the joys of the great deliverance.

John Lawrence stayed at Lahore for a month or so, and on February 1st, 1856, as soon, that is, as his wife was able to move, they set out for Calcutta to pay their final visit to Lord Dalhousie. They left their two little children at Lahore under the care of Mrs. Macpherson, the wife of John Lawrence's indefatigable Military Secretary, and started for a complete holiday. It was the first holiday which John Lawrence had allowed himself to take since the end of his furlough some fourteen years before, and even this he appears to have begrudged himself! 'I am very sorry to go,' he says to Edwardes in a letter which hints also at other troubles that were cropping up around him.

I do not anticipate much pleasure or comfort from the trip, and I shall be up to my neck in arrears of work on my return. No decisive reply has come regarding the honours, and I may have to come back like a *sharmindah billi* (a shamefaced cat). . . . As to Nicholson, I will never help him to leave the Punjab, though I will never oppose his going. I feel very sore about him. You might as well run rusty as he should. By the bye, he shot a man the other day who went at him with a drawn

sword. . . . Yes, Oude is a good job, and though I know that Outram is a good man, I do not see how he can work it properly. I hear —— is to be one of his Commissioners. He is an able fellow, but not fit for such a post, I should say. However, why should I fash myself with such matters? I only hope they will not want some of my good men. I would, however, make them a present of a number of fellows, with a right good will.

It may be well to mention here that it was during the illness of Lord Dalhousie at Ootacamund, during the preceding year, that the Oude question had reached its crisis, and that Lord Dalhousie had there composed his masterly Minute summing up for the 'convenience of those to whom it would belong to decide the future of Oude,' the evidence which had been collected as to the inveterate abuses of its government, and recommending something like its annexation. It is a document which, in spite of his intense physicial suffering, shows no symptom of mental disturbance or weakness. It is one, moreover, which must carry conviction to almost every impartial mind. For it was based on the evidence and on the recommendations of such staunch defenders of native dynasties, and men so intimately acquainted with the facts of the case, as Colonel Sleeman, General Low, and Sir James Outram, and was endorsed by the deliberate judgment of the Court of Directors, of the Board of Control, and of the Cabinet at home, of which Mr. Gladstone was a member.

The details of the measure and its justification lie beyond the scope of this biography. But it should be mentioned that John Lawrence quite approved of the even more stringent course taken by the authorities in England, the annexation of the territory and the abolition of the throne. Like the annexation of the Punjab, and unlike, I think, some other annexations of Lord Dalhousie, it was justified not only by treaty stipulations, but by the consciousness of the duty we owed to the people of the province, the duty of saving them from a despotism which was as feeble as it was cruel and wasteful, and which our support alone had saved from the two correctives which, after the manner of Orientals, might otherwise have been applied to it, insurrection or assassination. 'I suppose,' John Lawrence writes to his friend Courtenay on January 9, 'that the orders regarding Lucknow have come, and I hope for annexation. Anything short of it is a mistake. Will not all the people rejoice except the fiddlers, barbers, and that genus? I wish I was thirty-five instead of forty-five, and had to put it in order! In two years the

administration ought to equal that of the Punjab. It will be much more easily managed, having no dangerous frontier.'

John Lawrence arrived at Calcutta on February 17, 1856, and his first wish when there seems to have been to get away again! The idea of the work which he had left behind him, and which must fall, during his absence, on Montgomery, who was already overburdened, while Macleod, the Financial Commissioner, was in his usual arrears, seems to have haunted him. Lord Dalhousie being still at Barrackpore, he took up his quarters at Mountain's Hotel. It was the height of the Calcutta season, and the smart dresses, the constant parties, the state dinners and ceremonials at Government House connected with the departure of the old and the arrival of the new Governor-General, formed a sufficiently startling contrast to the simple life, the domestic pleasures, and the ceaseless round of duties from which the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab and his wife had seldom cared to emerge.

On the morning after his arrival, he wrote to Montgomery as follows :—

I arrived here yesterday by the railroad. [It had then been constructed as far as Burdwan, seventy miles from Calcutta.] We are both glad to have got over the trip. My wife is well and hearty, but a good deal tired. I only wish we were both back at Lahore. The trip is a severe one for a lady, and will be worse a month hence. We saw Major Martin and your little son Henry at Shergotty, both looking well. Martin was to stop a day or two at Burdwan, but he will try and see Henry before they sail on the 24th. I assure you it is no joke in this Babylon finding out anyone. I was wandering about this morning vainly endeavouring to find out various people's domiciles. . . . I have not seen the Governor-General yet. He is at Barrackpore, not very well, but by no means so ill as people make out. He does not leave India, I am sorry to say, until the 7th proximo. This, on all accounts, is very vexatious.

Lord Dalhousie welcomed his Chief Lieutenant on arrival in a touching note from Barrackpore. It was the last that he was to write to him in India, and nearly the last that he was ever to write to him.

My dear old Boy,—I have just received your letter, and as I shall be in Calcutta to-morrow evening for good, I will not give you the trouble of coming out here, but will see you, and with *sincere pleasure*, on Tuesday forenoon. As for my health, Jan La'rin, I am a cripple in every sense.

Ever yours most sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

Sunday evening.

Unfortunately, the letters which John Lawrence wrote during this interesting fortnight were exclusively business letters, and I have been able to glean from them, and from conversations with the few survivors who know anything of what occurred, little that is significant respecting it. Diaries and private letters there are none, and I cannot help—at this, more, perhaps, than at any other period of my work—wishing that some third person had been privileged to be present, and had recorded something of what was said by men who had done and dared so much together, and who were, in every way, so remarkable. One striking episode connected with the parting scene when Lord Dalhousie, with death stamped upon his face, was about to receive Lord Canning on the steps of Government House, I reserve for a future occasion, when it will, perhaps, come in still more appropriately.

Much to Lord Dalhousie's disappointment, the Gazette did not arrive from England in time to give to him the peculiar pleasure of conferring, and to John Lawrence the peculiar pleasure of receiving at his hands, the Knight-Commandership of the Bath. But any vexation which John Lawrence may have felt in consequence must, in part at least, have been removed by two unexpected occurrences. It was during this farewell visit that Lord Dalhousie drew up a Minute recommending that the Punjab should be raised to the dignity of a Lieutenant-Governorship, and that, as a matter of course, its Chief Commissioner should become its first Lieutenant-Governor; and secondly, John Lawrence met here—for the first and last time since the tragical parting at Lahore—his brother Henry, and during three days was able to have pleasant intercourse with him. 'I saw Henry,' he writes to Edwardes, 'in Calcutta for three days. I never saw him looking better. His beard is longer and greyer than formerly, but he himself looked strong and hearty. He was full of going home, and seemed half inclined to go then, but a case in Jypore detained him. I think he will certainly go next year.'

The Minute of the Governor-General on the change of the Punjab Chief Commissionership into a Lieutenant-Governorship is a document of historical as well as biographical importance.

Calcutta: February 25, 1856.

1. The completion of the proceedings which have been taken for the establishment of British rule in Oude, imposes upon me the obligation of placing upon record my conviction of the necessity which has arisen for

affording some relief to the Government of India from the ponderous burden with which it is now overladen and overtasked.

2. When I assumed the administration of India eight years ago, it was universally spoken of as a most laborious and responsible office. It will not be difficult to estimate how infinitely more responsible and more laborious it has now become, when the additions which have been made to the duties of the Government of India since 1848 are recalled to mind.

3. The administration of the kingdom of the Punjab, the administration of the province of Pegu, of the Straits Settlements, of the Tenasserim provinces, of Nagpore, and of the assigned districts of Hyderabad, have, all since 1848, been imposed upon the Government of India. To these new duties is now added the laborious task of organising and directing the administration of the kingdom of Oude. Thus the direct government of several former provinces, and of new territories, producing a revenue of not less than four millions sterling, has fallen upon the Governor-General in Council since 1848.

4. Besides all this, many new burdens have been imposed upon the supreme Government by changes and improvements in internal management. The whole direction of the Post Office throughout India now rests ultimately with the supreme Government. The control of the electric telegraph throughout India has, in like manner, been vested in the supreme Government. The special superintendence of questions relating to railways in India has been allotted to the Governor-General in Council, and the Secretariat of the Department of Public Works, controlling the undertakings of the whole empire, has been created and placed under his immediate orders.

5. The tendency of business in all departments is to increase. But when to that general tendency has been superadded the direct charge of the affairs of seven kingdoms and provinces, and of the many departments, each of which embraces the whole extent of the Indian Empire, it can hardly be matter of surprise that the burden should be now becoming too great for mortal shoulders to bear.

6. It is true that the government of Bengal has been given into the charge of a Lieutenant-Governor. But this measure relieved only the Governor-General. It made no difference to the other members of the supreme Government, while the institution of the Legislative Council has largely increased their labours and the demands upon their time.

7. The evil has been continually and rapidly augmenting, insomuch that I perceive a very material increase of daily business since the month of February 1855.

8. I have never asked for relief, and would have been extremely reluctant to do so if I had remained in charge of the Government. But as my act cannot now be possibly misconstrued, nor ascribed to a desire to save myself, I have no hesitation in declaring my conviction that the

addition of the kingdom of Oude to the business of the Government of India will render it hardly possible that the Governor-General in Council should be able to perform all the duty which will now fall upon the supreme Government.

9. It is indispensable to find some mode of relief.

10. The function which the Government of India has, for some time past, assumed, of taking into its own hands the direct administration of new provinces, has been pronounced by the public to have been a very wholesome one. But it is a function which is foreign to the nature of the Government of India, whose proper business is to control other Governments, not to become a local Government itself. Gradually, therefore, and as the new provinces become fit to walk alone, the direct power of administration in such provinces should be laid down by the Government of India.

11. It is by giving effect to this principle, if it should receive the assent of my honourable colleagues, that I propose to find the means of affording relief to the Governor-General in Council.

12. The Punjab has been for very nearly seven years under the administration of the Governor-General in Council. It is now, I think, in a condition to be formed into a separate charge. My proposal is, that the Punjab should be formed into a Lieutenant-Governorship, under the power given by the statute; and that Mr. John Lawrence, the very able and eminent man who has been associated with its government from the first, should be appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab.

13. I am aware of no reason why a province should not be constituted a Lieutenant-Governorship because it is not a regulation province.

14. If it should be thought that the Punjab by itself would constitute too small a jurisdiction for a Lieutenant-Governorship, I would then propose that the Lieutenant-Governorship should also include the province of Scinde. The addition of Scinde would not materially add to the extent of the financial charge, but it would augment the territorial charge very considerably. . . . . .

18. In any case I beg very strongly to advise that the Punjab should now be constituted a Lieutenant-Governorship, with Scinde, or without it.

19. The creation of a Lieutenant-Governorship rests with the Court of Directors. If the Honourable Court should sanction the creation of that office, the nomination to it will rest with my successor. I feel very certain that his judgment and inclination will equally lead him to select for that office the man whom universal acclamation would at once select —John Lawrence.

(Signed) DALHOUSIE.

The Governor-General's proposition was received 'with acclamation' by the members of his Council, a Council including men so

distinguished in various ways as General Low, John Peter Grant, and Barnes Peacock. A few sentences from the minute of the most eminent of them all, who afterwards became Sir John Peter Grant and Governor of Jamaica, may fitly find a place here :—

> In every point of view, it seems to me that the time anticipated by the framers of the last Charter Act has now arrived, and that the territory on the banks of the Indus should be immediately constituted a distinct Government, under a Lieutenant-Governor of its own. It will be thought by every man in India a happy accident, that this change cannot fail to raise to the rank he deserves to hold, one of the most able and successful administrators holding office in India. . . .

Sir Barnes Peacock, who was an excellent lawyer, expressed his opinion with equal emphasis thus :—

> I agree in thinking that the Punjab should be constituted a Lieutenant-Governorship, and in my opinion it is very desirable that Scinde should be united with it under one Government. I cordially concur with the encomium which has been bestowed on Mr. John Lawrence.

Lord Canning landed in Calcutta on the last day of February 1856, and was received by Lord Dalhousie on the steps which have witnessed the making and unmaking of so many kings ; and, by one of the most rapid but most striking and picturesque of ceremonials, he had 'within five minutes of his arrival,' as he wrote to a friend at home, become Governor-General of India. For a week, the outgoing and incoming rulers remained together in Government House, engaged in conference, so earnest and so prolonged that, as Lord Canning again wrote home, he had been 'unable to take more than one look out of doors during the whole time.' How much there was for the one man to impart and for the other to receive and to assimilate, anyone who has skimmed the pages of this biography may form some slight conception ; no one, perhaps, but those very few men who have filled the office of Governor-General themselves, have not sunk under its weight, and have lived to look back upon it, can have any adequate idea.

In the intervals of their conferences, John Lawrence saw, as it had been Lord Dalhousie's wish that he should do, much of his new chief, and made upon him an impression the strength of which is to be measured, not so much by the time they spent together, as by the severity of the test to which it was to be exposed, when the storm burst over the country, and made John Lawrence, for the

time, almost as truly Governor-General of the north and north-west of India as Lord Canning was of the east and south.

On March 6, Lord Dalhousie set sail from Calcutta. His embarkation was witnessed by a vast concourse of Europeans and of natives, not one of whom could fail to respect and admire the ruler who had done so much to enlarge the empire, to develop its resources, to elevate the condition of its masses; who had worked so fearlessly and thoroughly in accordance with the faith that was in him, and now, worn out by his labours, was going home to die. Among those who 'accompanied him to the ship' was, of course, the man whom he most respected, and most regretted of all whom he was leaving behind him. He was still simple 'John Lawrence,' for the Gazette, though it was on its way to India, did not meet Lord Dalhousie's eye till he touched at Ceylon. It contained the names of Sir William Sleeman and of Sir James Outram as well as of Sir John Lawrence; and hardly had the Chief Commissioner reached Lahore, when, with the news of the honour which had, at last, been bestowed upon him, he received also the warm congratulations of Lord Dalhousie written from his ship at sea.

H.C.S. Feroze. At sea: March 20, 1856.

My dear Lawrence,—The home news at Ceylon showed me your name in the Gazette as K.C.B. at last. You would take for granted my joy in this recognition of your merits and services. But I must give you joy nevertheless in words, and I do it from my heart. No man ever won the honour better, and of all your relatives and friends, not one has greater gratification in seeing honour done to you than I have. Pray offer my warmest congratulations and my kindest wishes to Lady Lawrence.

I was very miserable in parting from you all upon the ghaut that day. Of all I leave behind me, no man's friendship is more valued by me, no man's services are so highly estimated by me, as yours. God bless you, my dear John; write to me as you promised, and believe me now and always

Your sincere friend,
DALHOUSIE.

To Sir J. Lawrence, K.C.B.

Thus one great epoch in John Lawrence's life had come and gone. He had reached the point which, as in the case of his brother Henry, has been so fatal to the peace of mind, if not to the whole career of some of our best Indian administrators, when he had to accommodate himself, in the full maturity of his powers and his experience, as best he might, or as far as might be needful, to a change of master. A

trial, under the best of circumstances, such a change must always be. For unrestrained intercourse, full sympathy, and intimate friendship must be succeeded, for the time at least, by an atmosphere of strangeness, of reserve, and of constraint. How he was able to meet this trial, and other infinitely greater ones, we shall see hereafter. But, at this critical point in his career, ere yet the first rumblings of the impending storm have been heard in India, and while his province is still in the midswing of its peaceful progress, this chapter may, perhaps, find its most fitting termination.

CHAPTER XV.

JOHN LAWRENCE AND AFGHANISTAN. THE BREWING OF THE STORM. 1856–1857.

AN interval of little more than a year separates the departure of Lord Dalhousie from the great outbreak which is to transform the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab into its Dictator; and I propose in this chapter, the last that I am able to devote to his peaceful rule, to describe, as fully as its importance requires, or as space permits, the interview between Sir John Lawrence and Dost Mohammed at Peshawur, which helped so much to determine the attitude of the Afghans towards us throughout the Mutiny, and the attitude of Sir John Lawrence to Afghanistan throughout the whole of his subsequent career. I propose also to quote, incidentally, such extracts from his letters as appear to bring out any points in his administration, his character, or his opinions which may not, hitherto, have had sufficient stress laid on them, or have any bearing on the mighty conflict which, almost unnoticed, was now so near its birth.

I have already spoken of the trial which a change of masters must necessarily involve to a man of the great ability, of the pronounced views, and of the vast experience of Sir John Lawrence. 'I hope it is not true,' he had written to Lord Dalhousie in the preceding year, 'that Lord Canning is coming out at once, and that we must lose your Lordship as soon as people say. I must say that I shall sincerely regret your Lordship's departure from this country, though I trust it will be for your own comfort and advantage. In an appointment like mine it seems essential that I should possess the personal confidence of the Governor-General, and I can hardly hope to be as fortunate with your Lordship's successor as I have been with you. Should this prove to be the case, I may soon have the pleasure of seeing your Lordship in England, and I trust it will be with renewed health and increased honours.'

There could hardly be a greater contrast between two high-minded and able men than that between Lord Dalhousie and his successor. But John Lawrence's personal intercourse with the new Governor-General at Calcutta, and the frank and easy tone of Lord Canning's letters, the first of which congratulated him warmly upon his honours and only regretted that Lord Dalhousie had not been able to confer them on him in person, soon put him at his ease, and reassured him as to the future. 'I like Lord Canning,' he writes to his former chief a few months after his departure, 'as your Lordship anticipated, very much. He is kind, courteous, and considerate, as well as prompt and able. I hope he may remain in India for my time, and come up and see the Punjab.'

Lord Canning had scarcely been able to master the routine work of his high office when, much to his disgust, he found himself in the immediate prospect of a war with Persia. His farewell speech at the banquet which, according to custom, had been given him by the Directors of the East India Company before he left England, had revealed to the world the man and his policy in lines as clearly chiselled as was his own noble countenance. It was plain that he coveted no military renown, nor any addition to the vast responsibilities which, with equal modesty and courage, he declared that he would do his best to face. The quarrel with Persia, therefore, was none of his seeking. Its origin is rather to be sought far back in the blind folly which had led up to the disgraces and disasters of the first Afghan war. That fever fit had long since passed away, and there were few men indeed in England or in India who did not feel that we had been guilty of a blunder as well as of a crime, when we had endeavoured to impose a monarch of our own arbitrary choice on a free and a reluctant people. The awakening had been a rough one. But the dreams of a fevered brain have an after-effect upon the system, even when they have long since been recognised to be but dreams. What we had failed to do at Cabul, we must still attempt, after a manner, to do at Herat, a place which lay some two hundred miles further from our Indian Empire. In one respect, indeed, we had grown wiser. Our aim was not so much to put any particular man upon the throne of Herat, as to prevent certain persons from seizing it. Herat, lying as it does between Afghanistan and Persia, was, if we could have our own way, to belong to neither. It was not to belong to the Barukzyes, for we had injured Dost Mohammed too much to make us wish unnecessarily to increase his

power. It was not to belong to Persia; for it was an axiom, then as now, with all who have studied the subject, that Persia was a puppet in the hands of Russia, and that if the Persians occupied Herat, it would be Russia rather than Persia that would be knocking, not at the gate of India—that feat of geographical discovery was reserved for a later age—but at the gate of Afghanistan. It was in this belief that an attempt made by Persia on Herat in 1853 had been resolutely resisted by us, and a promise extracted from the Shah to respect its independence. But the Crimean War had followed; and the Shah, caring less for the English who had taken Sebastopol than for the Russians who had threatened Khiva and taken Kars, now again began to look wistfully towards Herat. Diplomatic relations between the two courts were broken off, and Dost Mohammed once more turned to us for aid against the common foe. The Home Government took the matter into its own hands, and, on July 11, 1856, sent an *ultimatum* to Persia intimating that an attack upon Herat would involve her in war with England.

Lord Canning and Sir John Lawrence were alike disgusted at the prospect of the 'inglorious and costly operations in Persia' which thus opened out before them; and they were hardly better pleased with the idea of a new treaty with Afghanistan, and of the complications in which it might involve us. But if war there was to be, it was better, as they both thought, that we should have the Afghans as our allies than as our enemies; and if only the Afghans would be satisfied with a supply of money and of muskets, then the worst danger of all,—the passage of an English army through Afghanistan, and a renewed English interference with Afghan politics,—might be avoided. A naval demonstration in the Persian Gulf, and the landing of a small British force on its shores, would suffice for our part of the business, and the march of an Afghan army towards Herat would do all the rest.

So Lord Canning addressed himself to his task with a good heart, wrote to John Lawrence asking what force he would be able to supply from the Punjab Irregulars for the expedition, invited him to express his general ideas on the subject, and, finally, consulted him on the delicate question of the chief command.

Most private. July 28, 1856.

My dear Sir,—In your letter of April 17 you speak of the great importance of selecting a good man for the command of the Persian expedition, and it is, indeed, impossible to exaggerate it. You say, with equal truth, that he should possess large political, as well as military experience, and be in full vigour. I agree entirely, but where is there

such a man? If you have any such, or anyone who approaches the mark, in your eye, I beg of you to tell me. . . . I beg you to give me your most private thoughts on the matter.

The two men whom Lord Canning had specified as possessing some of the requirements for the post were Sir H. Somerset and General S. Cotton. The answer of John Lawrence is so characteristic of him, does such honour to both his head and his heart, and is such a pleasant foil to the tragical parting of the two brothers at Lahore, that I quote it in full :—

Murri : August 9, 1856.

My Lord,—I beg to acknowledge your Lordship's notes of the 28th ult. I have looked carefully through the list of officers of H.M. and the Company's services in India, and the only men whom I can think of for such a command as that of an expedition into Persia, are those shown in the annexed list. I have noted in a few words the character which each officer bears, so far as I am able to judge.

I do not know much of Sir H. Somerset, but from what I have heard of him from officers who have been at the Cape, I do not think he would answer. Brigadier Sydney Cotton is one of the best officers I have seen in India. He is a thorough soldier, loves his profession, and has considerable administrative talent. Of all the officers I have noted, with one exception S. Cotton is perhaps the best. But, on the other hand, he is not an officer in whom political authority could be invested with advantage.

The man whom I would name for the command of such an expedition is my own brother Henry. I can assure your Lordship that I am not, in the slightest degree, biassed in his favour. He has seen a good deal of service, having been in the first Burmese war, in the second Afghan war, and in both the Sutlej campaigns. He is not an officer of much technical knowledge, except in his own branch (the Artillery), and he is not fond of details. But, on the other hand, he has great natural ability, immense force of character, is very popular in his service, has large political acumen, and much administrative ability. I do not think there is a military man in India who is his equal on these points. He is also in possession of his full vigour, both in mind and body; and there is not a good soldier in the Punjab, or, perhaps, in Upper India, of the Bengal Army, but would volunteer to serve under him. With him as the commander and S. Cotton as the second in command the arrangement would be complete. If anything happened to my brother, by that time Cotton would be at home in those points in which he is now defective. Cotton is master of all the technical details of every arm of the service, and devotes his entire energies and thoughts to the welfare of his soldiers. But he is not a man of the ability and breadth of view which my brother possesses. In invading such a country as Persia, it will not be mere

fighting which is to be provided for, but dealing with Oriental tribes and chiefs. And the result of all this would be negotiations requiring tact and knowledge of character.

Pray, my Lord, do not think there is anything like a job in what I have now written. If I know myself, I would revolt against such conduct. My brother and I have, I believe, a real and strong affection for each other; but in public life we have often disagreed, and to some extent, for a time, were estranged from each other. In all I have now said, I have been actuated solely by a desire for the public interests, and your Lordship will have full opportunity of comparing my statements with those of officers about you.

Few men would have had the moral courage, the single-heartedness, to write this. It is the exact picture of the man. He hated jobs with a perfect hatred. But he would have hated still more the moral cowardice which would have refrained from doing what was right, because, peradventure, it might be thought to be a job. Writing to Lord Canning on another occasion, as to the method by which the irregularities which had crept into the Public Works Department in the Punjab, might be best avoided in Oude, he describes himself thus :—

I have written to your Lordship openly and freely, as I conceive you would wish me to have done. If not too great a liberty, may I ask that such communications may be reserved for yourself alone? This being the case, I could always write with much less reserve on men and things than would otherwise be necessary. Your Lordship may, however, depend that I will write nothing but the truth. My feelings are so strongly enlisted in my public duties, that I may almost say that I have no friends independent of such considerations. My best friends are the officers of whom I think best in my public relations.

There were many exceptions, doubtless, to this last rather sweeping statement, but they were exceptions which proved the rule.

And in general harmony with his description of himself are some reminiscences contributed by Sir George Campbell, who, though he had not been educated under John Lawrence, was, at this time, on John Lawrence's own invitation, serving under him as Commissioner of the Cis-Sutlej states. 'I have no doubt,' says John Lawrence in a letter which lies before me, 'that Campbell has "grit" in him, and I shall be glad to recommend him for the Punjab if he likes;' and it is thus that Sir George Campbell writes of his former chief :—

It was while I was working under John Lawrence, in the Cis-Sutlej

states, that I came well to know and appreciate the man and his administration. In truth, I believe that at that time he was about in his prime in every way.

Though I am not of an enthusiastic temperament, and had not been a personal follower of the Chief Commissioner, I did, in this period, come to have a very great admiration for him. His simple-minded devotion to the public service, the immense energy and ability which he threw into his work, and the way in which he infused his own energy and devotion into others, impressed me very greatly, as did also his great clearness of head and strong common sense. The amount of work that he got through was marvellous. He did not only his own, but a good deal of other people's work, especially that of his dear friend Donald Macleod, the most amiable and, I believe, sensible of men, but whose office was always hopelessly in arrears. Sir John was a very strict disciplinarian. As he did not spare himself, so he did not spare others. He had a very active horror of idleness, and also of all jobs of every description. No doubt, he carried this to such a point that he was considered, in some degree, to be a hard man. For my part, I understood and appreciated the lines on which he acted. Nevertheless, it somewhat jarred upon one. At the time when I returned from furlough he was good enough to wish to have my services, but, as I thought, offered me something lower than I might fairly claim. Only when he found that I had better offers for the North-West Provinces he raised his offer. Still I felt that he was making the best bargain he could in the public interests, just as if he had been buying a horse! So, again, having a great dislike to the too great use or abuse of the hills, he was, on one occasion, somewhat severe on me when I was about to make a tour in the hill portion of my jurisdiction. But when I showed him, as I did, that, in reality, I had been down in the plains when he supposed otherwise, he accepted a strong reclamation of mine in very good part, and I felt that he was only careful of the public interests.

In truth, however, though I, who had no personal claims on him, and understood his principle of action, could well bear with these things, I think that, both at this time and in his subsequent career, there were a good many, and especially some of those nearest to him, and who had most claims on him, who could not take the same view, and thought that he had not sufficient consideration for their interests. The fact is that, in order to fulfil thoroughly the part of a leader of men, it is necessary, to a certain extent, to practise what, in plain Saxon, I should call 'jobbing for one's friends,' or what in the Latinised language in which we disguise these things, most of us would call 'generous consideration for services.' This Lord Lawrence never did. No doubt, he was substantially right. But the result was to deprive him, to some extent, of that enthusiastic personal following which tends so much to increase the fame of a great man.

Of the substantial accuracy of what has here been so well put by Sir George Campbell, there can be no doubt. It is abundantly supported by the correspondence before me. But the inferences which might possibly be drawn from it would seem to me, as probably Sir George Campbell would be the first to admit, to require some comment and some modification. And, first, I would remark that the 'man who will never job for his friends,' who never fails to tell them of their shortcomings, however ready he may be to bear with them; who is chary of his praise to their face, however lavish he may be of it behind their backs; who thinks nothing done while aught remains undone; who regards the performance of duty by himself and by others as matter of course, rather than as requiring 'generous recognition,' and yet manages to retain the loyal service and, in most cases, the devoted attachment of men so different from himself and from one another as Montgomery, Edmonstone, Edwardes, Macleod, Temple, Thornton, Norman, Becher, Pollock, Cust, the Chamberlains, the Lumsdens, the Brandreths, the MacNabbs, and a host of others, —not to speak of those whom he gathered round him as Governor-General, or in his private life, men like Eastwick, Muir, Aitchison, Seton-Karr, the Stracheys,—is, inherently, a greater man, is more powerful, more self-sufficing, more of a born ruler, more of a 'king of men,' than the man who is gifted with what are called the more 'popular' qualities, and, by them, gathers friends around him, who lend him a support which is not so intrinsically his own. Such a man was John Lawrence.

Not that he despised popularity. He neither shunned nor courted it. 'No man,' he says to his friend Ricketts, 'perhaps cares less for mere popularity than I do. But unpopularity and discontent are elements of weakness, and there is no man who will not prefer avoiding them if he can do so with honour.' 'If we act,' he says on another occasion, 'only to gain an ephemeral popularity, we shall never do much good. In India, of all places, it is hopeless to do one's duty and please the multitude.' Wanting as he was in the more popular qualities, he, no doubt, did manage to offend, at one time or another, all but the most discerning of his friends and subordinates. ut they all, with very few exceptions, gravitated back to him; and all, without any exception at all, loyally recognised him as their chief and leader. His intimate friends were always few in number. 'I don't care much for many fellows,' he said to one of the chosen few, when, late in his life, he was going back to India, 'but you are one of

them.' These few, and many others also, well knew that his roughnesses were but surface roughnesses. 'He had nothing of the bear but his coat,' said one of them to me. 'His roughnesses,' said another, 'were those of a big Newfoundland—no, let us say, of a St. Bernard dog.'

Of his appetite for work it is difficult to speak too strongly. He was insatiable of it. He was possessed by what his subordinates, with less physical powers or less force of will, might well have described as a demon of work. But it was now at last beginning to tell seriously upon him. His letters, during this year, often speak of his ill-health. His medical advisers insisted on his going to Murri a month earlier than usual, and, even then, he gained little. 'I have been very sick,' he writes to one friend, 'and unable to do much beyond getting through my work, and that not without an effort. My liver is out of order.' And to another, 'I am nearly distracted with work, and not well. I have from ten to eleven hours of work daily, in which time I work at railroad pace. Had I not seven children I would cut the concern. Well did the wise man say, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit."' Work enough this, one would say, for an invalid! Yet he sometimes felt sorely dissatisfied with himself. 'Men call me John the rigorous; of a surety, I am John the weak. When I look back on the last two years, and see how little has been done to bring the executive department' (that is, the public works) 'into order, I could hide my head for shame. My only real consolation is that I could not perhaps have effected more.' The cry that the Punjabis generally were overworked irritated him greatly. 'The present cry,' he writes to Montgomery, 'of overwork is not only absurd, but suicidal. If admitted, it will end in more officers and less pay. I should like to propose to some of our overworked men to give up some of their work and to pay a deputy; yet it is to this that the present howling will bring us.' 'It is the fashion,' he writes on another occasion, when he had been attacked for getting rid of a grossly incompetent officer, 'with the Press, to make out that I am hard and severe to those who serve under me. But, with from four to five hundred officers, civil, military, and uncovenanted, under me, it is not possible that I can do my duty and give no offence. But I would challenge any man to come forward and produce any official correspondence in which I have either dealt harshly, or have even used expressions which the circumstances of the case have not fully warranted. You do not surely suppose that a country like

this is to be kept in order by "rose-water" expressions or by "buttermilk" management. Ask the assistants who served under me at Delhi what was my treatment of them.' He might well appeal, just at that time, to his experience at Delhi; for Arthur Roberts, who had been 'joint magistrate and collector' with him there, and was now judge in the Saugur and Nerbudda territory, had written to him, very recently, in the warmest terms, expressing a hope that he might be allowed to serve under him in the Punjab, and John Lawrence had just forwarded his request to Lord Canning and recommended him for the post.

Of course, in his enfeebled condition of health, the worries of his position could not but tell more and more on him. 'I am distracted,' he writes on October 15, 1856, 'with work and long reports, and one botheration and another.' Among the worst of these 'botherations' was, once more, the wayward and restless spirit of Nicholson, who seemed quite unable, in spite of all his chief's consideration for him, to play second fiddle to him.

Not that there was not a tender side to John Nicholson. It was pleasant to see him with children at any time; and in the hands of Henry Lawrence or Herbert Edwardes he was himself like a little child. They could do anything with him. But he could brook no official control. Obstinate, haughty, and imperious, no regulations could bind him; they were made only to be broken. 'The autocrat of all the Russias,' he was called not inaptly by his brother officers; and the natives, not less naturally, as I shall show hereafter, were disposed to worship him as a god. On the frontier, he was free, even under John Lawrence's rule, to act pretty much as he liked. Many of his deeds, had they been done in other parts of India, would have caused a general rising, or his dismissal from the service —not without reason. He was one day, as I have been told by Colonel Urmston, who was then Assistant Commissioner at Peshawur, riding through a village, attended by a single orderly, and he observed in passing a mosque that the Moulla, instead of salaaming to him, looked at him with a gesture of contempt or hatred. When he got home he sent his orderly to fetch the Moulla, and then and there shaved off his beard! He was always prompt in action. One day he was standing at his garden gate in Bunnoo with a couple of Englishmen and a few native attendants, when a man with a sword walked up to him and, peering into his face, asked which of them was Nikkul Seyn. Nicholson divined his object, and snatching a

musket from a sentry who was passing by, brought it to bear on the man, and told him he would shoot him dead if he did not drop his sword. The man rushed in at him, sword in hand, and Nicholson was as good as his word. The ball passed into his heart through a copy of the Koran, which was turned down—so it was said—at a page promising Paradise to those who fell in the attempt to slay unbelievers! Nicholson's official report to the Chief Commissioner was as prompt and curt as was his act. It was to the following effect:—

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that I have just shot a man who came to kill me.

Your obedient servant,
JOHN NICHOLSON.

At one time, in a fit of discontent, Nicholson set his heart on going to the Crimea, but his chief put the objections forcibly as well as humorously before him: 'I hope that Lord Hardinge will not employ you in the Crimea. You are much more useful with us. As for your usefulness being diminished, this is all imagination. I hope to see Ross' [the kindly but somewhat feeble Commissioner of Leia], 'made a Bishop or a Commander-in-Chief in the Crimea, and so his post will fall naturally to you. He cannot intend to remain here always. I look on the way things are managed in the Crimea as perfectly distressing; and setting aside my desire to retain your services, I should be sorry, on your own account, to see you in the Crimea. The report here is that Lord Hardinge will resign and the Duke of Cambridge be made Commander-in-Chief in England.'

The Crimean danger had thus passed over, but another supervened. A request from Sir John Lawrence, couched in very courteous terms, that he would go down and co-operate with Chamberlain against his old foes the Musaod Wuzeris, brought on another storm; and Nicholson, equally angry with his chief and with Chamberlain, announced his intention of leaving the Punjab altogether. 'I can never help him to leave the Punjab,' said Lawrence sadly to Edwardes, 'but I will never prevent his doing so.' But more violent letters from Nicholson made him change his mind, and, at last, he consented to ask Lord Canning to transfer his impetuous lieutenant to Bhurtpore, where he would be under his brother Henry. Providence ruled otherwise, and, after a hot season spent by John Lawrence's leave in the cool climate of Cashmere, and a wistful glance towards

Persia and the war which was going on there, Nicholson settled down by his own wish as Deputy Commissioner at Peshawur, and, happily for India as well as for the Punjab, it was at Peshawur that he was still to be found when the Mutiny broke out. Well might John Lawrence say in a moment of desperation, worn out by work and worry, some at least of which Nicholson might have saved him: 'My work here is almost too much for me. Night and day I am hard at the mill. No old bullock in a drought is harder worked at a well irrigating the fields than I am. A single row, a personal altercation, involves me in no end of discussion, and stops all public business. If you send —— back to the Punjab, he will be the natural rallying-point for all the malcontents of the two services.'

The blind forces of nature were hardly less hostile, during this year, to Sir John Lawrence's peace of mind than those of man. There were outbreaks of cholera in various parts of the Punjab, especially at Lahore and Ferozepore. There was fever everywhere, and everywhere also floods and inundations, with terrible destruction of property. A great portion of Leia was damaged, and Dera Ghazi Khan was half washed away. Add to this, that the Court of Directors, little knowing what had gone on behind the scenes, and how strenuously John Lawrence had striven to prevent it, even to the point of a rupture with a man he esteemed as he did Napier, censured him severely for having allowed the Civil Engineers to go so fast. And, worst perhaps of all, now that his health was at the weakest, and his work at the heaviest, his Secretary, Temple, who had an avidity for work almost equal to that of his chief, went home on furlough, leaving no one in the Punjab who could adequately take his place. 'Temple is a host in himself,' John Lawrence had written to Edwardes shortly before the separation came, 'and does an infinity of work whether with me or not.' Nor was he, in this instance, sparing of his acknowledgments to Temple himself. 'I have the list of reports,' he writes in his farewell letter to him, September 10, 1856, 'which you have sent off in the last six months. Their name is Legion. It is only wonderful how much you have got through. . . . I must now wish you good-bye. May all good fortune attend you. If it is good for you, I hope you may come back. But, in any case I must say that you have proved yourself even a more able secretary than I had anticipated, and have afforded me great aid and every satisfaction. Let me hear from you in Calcutta and after you get home.'

But, whatever his difficulties and disappointments, and whatever the expressions of vexation to which he gave vent on occasion, in writing to his intimate friends, it must not be imagined that he ever lost heart, ever relaxed in his efforts, or ever despaired of the future of his province. Sometimes, on the very day on which he had written despondingly to one friend, he would write in a very different strain to another. For example, to his friend Courtenay he says :—'Affairs are going on pretty much in the old way—ten hours daily at the desk and a sober walk on the Mall in the evening. The Punjab continues to prosper, and, please God, shall continue to prosper so long as I am at the helm. It shall not, if I can help it, get into disorder.' And to Lord Dalhousie :—'Everything seems to prosper with us. The Border is quiet, and improvements are going on steadily on all sides. Temple and I have, between us, prepared a third Punjab report. It has been already despatched, and will no doubt, in due time, see the light. I hope your Lordship will procure a copy : the India House will have plenty of them.' And to Lord Canning :—'I am much obliged to your Lordship for your kind expressions regarding the administration of the Punjab. So long as I remain here, I hope that its management may never deteriorate, and, so far as it may be in my power, it never shall. But its progress must always mainly depend on the officers who serve in it. Good laws and good rules are soon inoperative without able, experienced, zealous men to carry them out.'

But I must return, once more, to the war with Persia, and the proposed alliance with Afghanistan.

After the treaty of 1855, Dost Mohammed had taken possession of Candahar, and Futteh Khan Khuttuck, who had been sent thither by us on a special mission connected with the ratification of the treaty, had brought back a vigorous description of the Afghan ruler, and of the difficulties by which he was surrounded. Dost Mohammed, he said, was nearly seventy years of age, had a perfectly white beard which he dyed black, looked in ill-health, seldom went out, and when he did, rode on an elephant, 'a very bad sign in an Afghan well known for his horsemanship!' Everybody was looking out for his death, especially his numerous sons, who were only waiting till his life was over, to fight it out over his dead body. There were endless feuds among them, but, out of respect to their father, they put off cutting each other's throats. Old as he was, Dost Mohammed was anxious to march in person against Herat. But he had no means. What he

wanted from us was not men, of which he had plenty, but money, of which he had none at all. His army was starving, and was therefore driven to plunder the citizens and farmers. 'Candahar,' said Futteh Khan, 'is like a field of ripe *bajra* (millet), and the citizens on the roofs of the houses, like bird-scarers in their *machans* (platforms), are crying Ha! ha! to scare away the flock of plunderers. Meanwhile, the Ameer himself is never abused by anyone. He conciliates them all with soft words, "My son," or "My brother," or "My child," which goes further than a rupee.' He had come to Candahar, he wrote to a friend, that he might visit his father's grave, which was situated on a bare hillock eight miles distant, in the hope that he might, at last, lay his own beside his father's bones. Such were the condition and such the apparent prospects of the man who was, nevertheless, said to be eager to march at the head of his army to Herat, and whom we were to subsidise with arms and money. Well might John Lawrence question whether both would not be thrown away!

But there was life in the old Dost yet. After appointing Gholam Hyder Khan—whose life, two years before, had seemed to John Lawrence not to be worth six months' purchase—Governor of the newly annexed province of Candahar, he left the city on September 14, and led his starving army back to Cabul, and from there sent to Edwardes to propose a meeting with the British authorities. Edwardes, as might have been expected from his antecedents, was in favour of the interview, John Lawrence against it.

> It appears to me we shall get nothing out of the Ameer, except by paying through the nose for it; and this being the case, I would not bring on an interview. Should his Highness come down to meet us and not gain his object, he would assuredly be aggrieved. Even if we give him twenty or thirty lacs of rupees, we can feel no assurance whatever we have no pledge that he will take an active part in the Herat affair. As folks say of the Russians, a material guarantee is necessary. . . . Just fancy Colonel Jacob writing coolly to Government to place all Afghan relations under him! So far as I personally am concerned, it would cause me no regret.

Lord Canning was in favour of the interview, but expressed his emphatic agreement with Sir John Lawrence's view that the best chance for getting on well with the Afghans was to have as few points of contact with them as possible; and Sir John, not caring to gain credit by a thing which he did not wholly approve, generously pro-

posed, unless the Ameer made a point of his coming, to stay away and leave the matter in Edwardes' hands. But the lieutenant was as generous as his chief. 'I left it to Edwardes,' John Lawrence writes to Lord Canning, 'to decide whether I should be present or not, and he, very magnanimously, has replied that I had better be there.' Accordingly, on November 16, he set out for Rawul Pindi, 'on a wild goose chase,' as he calls it to his friend Montgomery. His intention was to go by Koshalgurh on the Indus to Kohat, and there to wait till he heard whether the Ameer proposed to meet him in the Kurum valley, a hundred miles further on, or at Peshawur.

While he was waiting here, the long expected but still somewhat startling news came that Herat had been captured by the Persians, and, in the first flush of anxiety, Edwardes wrote a memorandum, which he begged John Lawrence to forward to Government, advocating the immediate despatch of British troops to Cabul and Candahar. In his after life, or in his soberer moments, Edwardes would have looked on such a proposal with dismay. But his letter did good work now by calling forth a protest from his chief, in which he clearly set forth that policy towards Afghanistan, to which, founded as it was on an almost unique knowledge of the facts of the case, he ever afterwards clung, through good and evil report, with characteristic tenacity.

To Edwardes John Lawrence wrote, on the day on which his proposal reached him, November 25 :—

I do not think that Government will send a force into Afghanistan. For my part, I believe it would be a false move. If Russia is not at the bottom of this attack on Herat, it will not produce those evils which you fear. But if she is the source of the affair—and I fully believe that she is—I consider that the battle for India is to be fought on this side the Soliman range, and not on that. The money which we must spend in defending Afghanistan in the mode proposed in your memo. would make us irresistible in India. It appears madness to send a light force to Candahar, without heavy guns, and without supports. If Persia advances on Candahar, such a brigade, under the feeble defences of Candahar, would assuredly be compromised. I shall never forget a remark of Lord Hardinge's to the effect that we might rest assured that, if ever we took the field against an enemy, we must do it as principals and not as auxiliaries, for the whole brunt of the war would fall on us. If we send Chamberlain and 4,000 men to Candahar to-day, it will end in our having to send 20,000 men under feeble and incapable generals in the end. If we carry on war in Afghanistan, we shall ruin our finances, and, in the event

of a reverse, the very Afghans will sell us to our enemies. They will make friends of them at our expense. On the other hand, should a Russo-Persian army press on and meet us at the mouth of the Bolan or Khyber and experience a reverse, then the Afghans, who have united with them, will play the samé game against them.

On the following day, he wrote a much more elaborate exposition of his policy to Lord Canning, which I quote nearly in full. Its importance, in view of recent events and very possibly of recurring contingencies in Afghanistan, it would be difficult to over-estimate :—

Kohat : November 26, 1856.

My Lord,—I beg to enclose a memo. which I received yesterday from Lieutenant-Colonel Edwardes regarding the measures which he would recommend consequent on the fall of Herat. In these views I need hardly say that I cannot concur. I have thought over this question, to the best of my ability, frequently and anxiously. I have read up all the information which I could procure, and have discussed the subject with some of the best officers in the army at different times ; and the conclusion which has been invariably forced on my judgment is, that it would be a fatal error for us to interfere actively in Central Asia. I annex an extract of a hurried letter I wrote to Edwardes yesterday. It contains an outline of the objections which occur to me against his plans.

As regards Herat, I believe that it is now a place of considerable strength. Major Saunders, of the Bengal Engineers, who was slain at Maharajpore, if I mistake not, visited the place ; and under his directions, and those of the late Major D'Arcy Todd, I believe large sums were expended on the fortifications. But, on this subject, Lieutenant-Colonel James Abbott, now at Isharpore, could give your Lordship full information. I cannot perceive any reason why Russia could not throw into the place any number of Engineers and Artillerymen she might think proper, long before our army could sit down in front of it. And these officers, with the assistance which Persia could supply in labour, would render it impregnable against all the means which we could bring from India against it. It is my conviction that any such attempt by us would not only entail the expenditure of millions, but would assuredly end in disaster.

I admit that the interests of the Afghans are at present identical with ours, but it does not follow that such will always be the case. If we prove successful in the contest, no doubt the Afghans will remain faithful. But in the event of a reverse, it might prove their true game to take the other side. If we send an army to Afghanistan, it must go prepared for all contingencies, to meet all comers, to depend solely on its own means and its own resources, and, at Herat, it would be many hundred miles from our frontier, and from all effective support.

I can, even now, recall to mind my brother Colonel George Lawrence's vivid description of the march through the Bolan Pass and the entry into Candahar. He assured me that out of the whole force there were not 500 horses able to carry their riders, and that these horsemen could not have got their horses into a canter for half a mile! The Artillery horses were in a still worse plight: and after all, what was the strength of this force? Including all Shah Soojah's troops, it did not, I believe, exceed 12,000 men!

It is quite true that the circumstances of those days and of the present time are very different. Scinde and the Punjab are ours. We should go to defend the Afghans, not to wage war against them. Still, we must also bear in mind that all through Scinde and the Bolan, and from thence to Candahar, and so on to Ghuzni, not a shot was fired at us. No resistance was offered. More than this could not now be anticipated.

Cabul and the countries between India and Herat seem scarcely capable of feeding a large force. I am sure it could not be done without harassing the people, and making them more or less hostile to us. It is difficult in parts even of the Punjab to feed 3,000 or 4,000 men in one place. In 1850, when I accompanied Lord Dalhousie from Rawulpindi to Kalabagh on the Indus, we were in danger of starving, because it rained for three or four days! We had, literally, to collect food and forage from a distance of fifty or sixty miles round.

The Afghans are fickle and fanatical to a proverb, and their rulers have but a nominal control over them. Even if willing, the latter could not ensure supplies, and the visits of the Commissariat agents and contractors would soon prove eminently distasteful.

I am equally averse to the minor or less dangerous measure of despatching an Irregular force to garrison Candahar. If the Ameer cannot fight his own battles on his own ground, it seems vain for us to attempt to do it. The Persians may succeed in occupying Candahar for a time, but the possession will probably entail future disaster. The Afghans, if they ever can be induced to combine, will do so to get rid of such an invader. There can be no doubt that the Afghans, despite the natural strength of their country, and the martial character of the population, are really weak, owing to internecine quarrels, and the fickle and faithless character of the people. It was for these reasons that I told Lord Dalhousie (I quote from memory) that I believed they would never be able to resist a formidable invader moving on India, who had arrived at Herat.

If we send a force to Candahar, it will eventually necessitate the reoccupation of the country. Afghanistan will then become the battle-field for India, and the cost of maintaining our position will render India bankrupt; and should we meet with reverses, we shall have to retrace our steps, with an exhausted treasury and a dispirited army. Whereas, on the other hand, if we leave Afghanistan alone, and concentrate our means

on this side of the Soliman range, we should meet an invader, worn by toil and travail, with a weak artillery and distant from its resources, as he debouched from the passes. Under such circumstances, defeat should be certain, and defeat would be annihilation.

The money which we should expend in besieging Herat and in fighting in Afghanistan would double our European force in India, finish our most important railroads, and cover the Punjab rivers with steamers. I believe that the Cabul war, from first to last, did not consume less than twelve millions of money; and this is but a trifle compared to the sacrifices which would be necessary against Russia and Persia combined, if we met them in Central Asia.

I might also add—what, however, in so stupendous a question is a point of less consideration—that we can ill spare such a force (a part of the Punjab force) as that which it is proposed to send to Candahar. It is of all others especially adapted for the duties on which it is employed. It contains some of the flower of our Indian soldiers and officers. It is only in the course of seven years' labour that we have brought it into its present condition. The mountain tribes have never yet been thoroughly punished, let alone subdued; and the force which Colonel Edwardes indicates as available to take their place can ill be spared. There are not, on this side of India, even rifles with which to supply them; and it is most inconvenient and embarrassing, employing the Regular native troops on civil duties. I do not forget that I have informed your Lordship that I could spare 2,000 of the Punjab force for service in Persia. But this was with much difficulty; and if nearly double that number be withdrawn, we must permanently confine ourselves to a defensive system on the frontier. And such a system has proved radically weak and ineffective.

I ride through the Kohat Pass to-morrow, and expect to be at Peshawur on the morning of the 29th.

With the views thus forcibly expressed, Lord Canning entirely concurred; and John Lawrence, hearing, at last, that the Dost proposed to meet him at Jumrood, and not in the Kurrum valley, traversed the Kohat Pass and reached Peshawur on November 29, where he was shortly afterwards joined by his wife from Rawulpindi. The Dost, like a true Oriental, was slow and stately in his movements, and another month had passed before news came that he had reached the further end of the Khyber. The Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, the Commissioner of Peshawur, General Sydney Cotton, who was in command of the Peshawur force, and Harry Lumsden, who was in command of the Guides, at once moved forward to Jumrood, accompanied by some 3,000 troops of all arms, so as to be in readiness to receive the Afghan sovereign with becoming honours,

as soon as he should set foot on British soil. But the Ameer, fearing the treachery of which, as an Afghan, he was always capable, begged that Sir John Lawrence would first meet him on Afghan territory. Sir John consented, and early on New Year's Day, 1857, two of Dost Mohammed's sons, accompanied by a band of wild-looking horsemen, appeared in the British camp, ready to escort him into the royal presence. It must have been a journey of no ordinary interest to the English visitors. For it was the first glimpse that any one of the party —though most of them had lived in sight of its entrance for so many years—had ever been able to catch of the interior of that forbidding pass, over whose gloomy portals might well have been inscribed the words of Dante,

'All hope abandon, ye who enter here.'

It was indeed an instinct of self-preservation, no less than the stringent orders of the Government, which had prohibited Englishmen, however curious and however adventurous, from entering within the precincts of those dreaded Khyberees who, half-starved as they were, and living, many of them, like foxes in holes in the ground, had never yet been subdued by man, had levied black-mail from every conqueror who passed through their fastnesses, and sallying forth by night, had, within the last few years, murdered so many British subjects and harried so many native flocks and herds, almost under the eyes of the garrison of Peshawur. It must have been with feelings, therefore, not of curiosity or of interest alone, that the small cavalcade entered the forbidden precincts and made its way for some miles up the pass, every crag and pinnacle of which might well conceal an Afghan marksman.

John Lawrence, knowing well the risk he ran, had begged Sydney Cotton—to whose account I owe some of the details of the story —to give orders to his troops that, if any firing was heard within the pass, they should at once enter it and rush to the rescue. It was an order which, as it turned out, might have cost the lives of the whole party; for when they reached the royal camp, the heavy guns which were drawn up in front of the Ameer's tent fired a salute in their honour, the salvo of Artillery was taken up by a musketry fire from the Afghan troops who lined the lower hills, and this again by the mountaineers who crowned the tops for miles along the pass, till the whole Khyber rang and rang again with the echoes of what might well have been mistaken for a general engagement. Had the officer

left behind in command of the British troops done as he was told, and moved with all speed into the pass, there can be little doubt, argues Sydney Cotton, that the Afghans, seeing or pretending to see the treachery which they feared, would have fallen on the defenceless Feringhis and massacred them to a man. But concluding, from the regularity of the fire, that it was only a salute, he wisely stood his ground, and the danger passed by.

A grand Durbar was then held, 'a collection of cut-throats and villains,' says the Chief Commissioner, 'such as I had never found myself among before.' Conspicuous among them was Saadut Khan, chief of the Mohmunds, our own arch-enemy. But, at Sir John Lawrence's request, the Dost ordered him to withdraw from the Durbar. Two days afterwards the Dost, with a venerable white beard —for he no longer now cared to dye it black—and clad in a garment of coarse camel's hair, entered British territory, passed through a line of 7,000 British troops, a mile long, drawn up to do him honour, and pitched his camp at Jumrood. And here, on January 5, the business of the meeting began.

Behind the Ameer stood his sons, and on his left were his most trusted Sirdars, while he himself set forth at length his relations with Persia, and showed, pathetically, how his friendship for us had embroiled him with the Shah, and had now led to the fall of Herat. What was he to do? He was ready to do our bidding, whatever it might be, and, witness it Allah and his Prophet! he would henceforward be our firm friend, though all the world was on the opposite side. It was the cue of the Chief Commissioner, at this first interview, to elicit the views of the Ameer rather than to set forth his own; and Dost Mohammed, waxing more eloquent, as he warmed to the subject, declared that it was the dearest wish of his heart to recover Herat; and that if the English would help him by making a strong diversion in the Persian Gulf, and by giving other aid, he would raise a force from all the countries south of the Oxus, with which he would beat his enemies in the field, mine the walls of Herat, blow up its towers, and take the place at the point of the sword!

At this point in the conference, a horseman galloped up to Sir John Lawrence with a telegraphic message from Lord Canning at Calcutta, which informed him that a force of 5,000 troops would be sent to the Persian Gulf, and that an article would be inserted in any treaty of peace with Persia binding her to renounce all pretensions to Afghanistan, and to withdraw her troops from Herat. The message

ended with the significant words, 'You may make use of this.' And John Lawrence did make use of the first part at once, but reserved the second and more important announcement for a future day. Meanwhile, he begged the Ameer to lay before him an exact statement of the means at his disposal. This, replied the Ameer, was a very difficult matter, and would require a full day for its consideration. So the meeting broke up.

Two days afterwards, on January 7, the conference met again, and, this time, at the tent of the Chief Commissioner. The Ameer's statement showed that he had 34,000 men and 61 guns at his disposal; a force which he thought ought to be increased, in view of the expedition to Herat, to 50,000 men and 100 guns. 'But if,' said he, 'you tell me to take more troops, I will take more; if less, less. You, Sahibs, know Persia best.'

The Chief Commissioner proceeded to point out the magnitude of the enterprise, and the divisions of the Afghans at home which had cost them Attock, Cashmere, and Peshawur; when Hafiz-ji, one of the Sirdars, interposed with the very pertinent question, 'Did we intend to send any British officers into Afghanistan?' 'If we give you money and material to aid in your expedition to Herat,' replied Sir John, 'we must send officers to see that it is properly applied, but they will exercise no kind of authority or command.' The matter dropped for the time; and, on the following day, the Ameer's sons brought in more detailed statements of their resources, which made it clear that if the expedition to Herat lasted only a year, a contribution of 63 lacs of rupees, of 50 guns, and of 8,000 stand of arms would be required from us, besides an unlimited supply of ammunition. This was a large demand, and led John Lawrence to ask how much would be required if a strictly defensive policy were observed towards Persia.

'The question,' replied one of the Sirdars, 'between Persians and Afghans is one not merely of this world, but of the next; for Sunnis and Shiahs can never unite: but the matter shall be considered, and if you prefer it, the Afghans, contrary to their wishes and their usual practice, will remain on the defensive. In this case, 4,000 stand of arms and ammunition, together with sufficient money to support 8,000 additional infantry, is all that we shall ask of you.' Of these terms and this policy the Chief Commissioner approved, and telegraphed his recommendation of them to the Government of India. Lord Canning telegraphed back his assent, and Sir John

Lawrence then advised the Dost to give up the expedition to Herat, and offered 4,000 muskets and a subsidy of a lac of rupees a month, so long as the war should last, or as it should please the British Government to continue it.

There was only one condition of the subsidy which gave rise to serious discussion—the right to depute British officers to Cabul, who were to see that it was properly applied. The Ameer 'in a very marked and decided manner' observed that he had only consented to such a step on the understanding that an attempt would be made by our aid to recover Herat. And, on the following day, when the draft articles of the treaty were being discussed, the Sirdars, after talking the matter over with him, renewed their objections to the proposal. It was not so much, they remarked, that the Ameer personally objected to the presence of English officers at Cabul, as that the people would not like it; their national and religious feelings would be outraged; they would think, when they saw Europeans in the capital, that the old days of Shah Soojah were come back again, and the mission would thus defeat its own end. Let a native vakil be placed at Cabul, and let British officers, if the British Government insisted on it, be placed at Candahar, where they would be more useful with reference to the Persian War, and less obnoxious to the population. An alliance between the Afghans and English must be brought about gradually. 'Do not let us go,' they said, 'too fast.'

Wise advice, wisely listened to! Otherwise the tragedy of 1878 might have been anticipated in 1857. The Lumsden brothers might have been as Cavagnari and his followers. The outbreak of the Mutiny might have found us deeply plunged in a war with Afghanistan, and the resources of the Punjab must then have been concentrated on Peshawur, rather than poured down in one continuous stream towards Delhi. Could India have weathered such a storm?

The theoretical right, indeed, to send officers temporarily to Cabul was insisted on. But assurances were given that it would not be called into exercise at present; and it was clear that, so long as the Chief Commissioner had any voice in the matter, it would not be exercised at all. The announcement that, whenever a treaty was made with Persia, the Afghans should not be left in the lurch, but be included in it, was wisely kept by John Lawrence to the last, when the Sirdars pointedly put the question to him. They were delighted to receive his answer, but, for some reason or other, forgot to ask that a promise to that effect should be inserted in the treaty. 'But,' remarks

Sir John Lawrence, characteristically enough in writing to Lord Canning, 'I consider that my verbal assurance pledges Government as much as a written article.' It was reserved for the authors of the second Afghan War to lay down the opposite doctrine, and contend, in arguments of evil omen and of fatal consequences, that the word of an English officer—even of a Governor-General—is not his bond, and can be disavowed at convenience.

On January 26, at 4 P.M., the articles of agreement were signed and sealed in the Ameer's tent; the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, the Commissioner of Peshawur, and Major Lumsden being present on one side; the Ameer, his son, Sirdar Azim Khan, his brother, and many Sirdars, being present on the other. 'I have now made an alliance,' exclaimed the Ameer, 'with the British Government, and, come what may, I will keep it till death.' And he was as good as his word. The Afghans returned to their homes well satisfied, but not so Sir John Lawrence. For in spite of the conclusion of the treaty, and the way in which he had managed to minimise its dangers, in spite also of the warm thanks of the Governor-General, he could not help asking himself, whether the lac of rupees to be poured monthly into the lap of the Ameer, would not have been better spent in strengthening our defences at home, or in finishing the great public works in the Punjab which were, even then, being starved for want of means.

Sir John Lawrence had not been very favourably impressed with the trustworthiness of his venerable guest, and one incident of their intercourse, related in the course of a letter to Lord Canning, is too good to be lost.

Peshawur · January 30, 1857.

As regards the Ameer, it is very difficult to divine what are his real views and feelings. I confess that I felt no confidence in anything which he said. His interests, at present, lead him to turn to us. But there can be no security that he will remain faithful one day longer than seems convenient. He has no sense of shame. He sent me as a present, the only one he made, ten horses and two mules, nearly all of which were spavined and worn out. The whole lot did not fetch 1,000 rupees, and this notwithstanding the princely way in which we treated him!

One day, Colonel Edwardes and I had a very amusing scene with him. After we had concluded our public discussions, I said I should like to see the Ameer for a few minutes alone. Upon this, all his chiefs and courtiers retired. I then told the Ameer that, as a pledge of his good feeling towards us, I asked him to let me see any letters which he

had received from Maharaja Golab Sing during the last war. I told him that it was well known that negotiations, and even an agreement, had been carried on and concluded between the Ameer and the Maharaja, to which the latter had not adhered; that therefore the Ameer was free in honour to take his own course, and that it would, no doubt, be considered a mark of friendly feeling if he himself told me what had occurred, and showed me such documents as were in his possession. That such had been the case I consider to be beyond doubt. Both Sirdar Chuttur Sing and Raja Shere Sing had told me so at Lahore after the war, and it was well known that the Ameer had often publicly complained of the want of faith of the Maharaja. Still the Ameer absolutely denied that anything of the kind had occurred.

When pressed by me a good deal on the subject he exclaimed, 'I swear by Abraham, by Moses, by Esau, by Jesus Christ, and, if there be any other prophets, I swear by them, that I have no papers of the kind, and that nothing was ever arranged between me and the Maharaja.' When I told the Ameer that I could not credit his statement, he expressed no indignation whatever! The only feeling seemed to be that of disappointment! Sirdar Azîm Khan, his son, who was present, eventually said that he would ascertain if any documents were forthcoming; and if there were any, that they should be produced. He added that he did not know whether the Ameer had any, but that Sultan Mahomed Khan probably had. When Azim asked us if we did not believe the Ameer, and we replied that we did not, he began to laugh heartily, and, I verily believe, had a higher opinion of our intellects than before. . . .

I am delighted to hear what your Lordship has said respecting a move from this side against Herat. I feel the strongest conviction of the wisdom of these views. I can conceive no concurrence of circumstances which should take us up there. The expense would throw us back twenty years. Our army is not adapted to such an expedition. It would, I verily believe, be fighting the enemy's battles to attempt it. A reverse at this distance from our resources must prove disastrous in the extreme. And even if we were successful and Herat was recovered, there would be no security that it might not fall into an enemy's hand within the next five years.

The effect of the possession of Herat by an enemy, on the minds of the natives of India, must, of course, be a matter of opinion. I myself do not think that they will trouble themselves on the subject. I believe I know the natives and their opinions and feelings as well as most British officers, and I was at Delhi, the seat of the Mohammedan population, during the first siege of Herat in 1839, and, neither then nor in the present instance, have I perceived that the natives felt much interest on the subject. One of the arguments for the advance into Afghanistan in 1839-40 was that a general feeling of excitement, a general feeling adverse

to our rule, existed in Upper India. I never myself saw a symptom of it; and the best evidence that such was not the case is that, even after unprecedented disasters, no such feeling was shown. I believe there is no man now alive who will ever see a Russian army in India, and no Asiatic army could stand for a day before our troops in the open plain. To do anything against us in the field, a large body of good European troops with plenty of artillery, and the whole in proper order, must come. A large army cannot come rapidly through the intervening countries even between the Oxus and the Indus without being demoralised; and if a small force should advance, or a large force attempt it by slow degrees, in the one case, they will be beaten, and, in the other, they will not be able to feed themselves. Afghanistan does not grow food for a large army of strangers. It can scarce feed its own population. No means of transport exist for such a force. Carts there are none, nor roads along which they could move. The few canals in the country would prove wholly inadequate to supply conveyance. Sirdar Azim himself incidentally told me that such was the case. . . . Pray excuse this hurried letter. I march towards Lahore to-morrow, and have more to do just now than I can easily manage.

Not that Sir John Lawrence did not get on excellently with the Dost, whose faults he saw so clearly. The Dost was as clever as he was dignified; and, what was better still, he was, like most Orientals, an excellent story-teller. He would sit up all night, telling the most amusing stories to the Chief Commissioner; and the Chief Commissioner, who, as I have given my readers good reason to believe, was no bad hand at telling stories himself, would often retaliate in kind. The Dost was fond of talking of his poverty, and complained that, with all his care, his expenditure invariably exceeded his income! 'How do you get on, then?' said Sir John. 'Why, you see,' replied the Dost, with perfect gravity, 'I borrow each year from the moneylenders, who are generally Persians. They know that as soon as I am dead my sons will spring at each other's throats, that there will be general anarchy, and that they will lose everything. So when they press me for payment I call them together and, putting on a long face, tell them that I am being killed by anxiety about money. They see it is better to forgive the debt, and keep themselves and me in life and prosperity a little longer. And so we all start afresh.'

The mission of British officers to Afghanistan, of which so much had been said in the conference, was, by desire of the Ameer, not despatched till the 13th of March following. The officers selected for the dangerous and thankless office were Harry Lumsden, whose

name has been so often mentioned in this biography before, and his younger brother Peter, whom the Chief Commissioner describes as 'a very fine young fellow, universally loved, a capital rider and surveyor, good-tempered, active and intelligent.' But Peter Lumsden fell ill, and Sir John Lawrence, not thinking it right to send anyone who was in weak health so far beyond the reach of medical assistance, telegraphed to Lieutenant Henry Norman, a young officer of equally high promise, who was then serving as Assistant Adjutant-General at Meerut, to come up and take his place. But the proposal to send a doctor with the expedition, whose medicine chest would, probably, do more than anything else to make the mission popular at Candahar, met the difficulty; and Norman remained behind, to do, as it turned out, even more perilous and much more important work at Delhi, than would have fallen to him at Candahar. Dr. Bellew, who is now well known by his writings on Afghanistan and Persia, was the medical officer selected to accompany the mission. Its primary object was to see that the subsidy given by England was not misapplied or wasted by the Ameer. But its members were also bidden, in their instructions, to bear in mind that they would 'do good service to the British power in India, if they could impress upon all with whom they came into contact, that we had no desire to send a single man, armed or unarmed, across the border, except with the good-will of the Afghan nation; that our presence was temporary and for one single purpose, which would cease with the war; that what we desired was that the Afghans should always retain their freedom and independence, and defend themselves effectually against aggression from whatever side; that it was for this one object that our aid was given, and that all we asked in return from them was confidence in the purity of our intentions.'

It will be remembered that when the war with Persia had first been in prospect, Sir John Lawrence, considering it of paramount importance that the man selected for the chief command should have political as well as military ability, had strongly recommended his brother Henry for the post. Failing him, he had, in a second letter, recommended Sir James Outram; and failing him, again, Colonel Jacob, whose mixed political and military experience in Scinde would, he thought, in spite of his defects, 'an acrimonious temper and an overweening vanity,' well fit him for it. It turned out that the appointment lay not with Lord Canning, but with the Home Government; and while Lord Canning and Sir John Lawrence were dis-

cussing the question, their choice had already fallen on the man whom Sir John had put second on his list. Outram had gone home in May, to all appearance quite broken down in health by his long and brilliant labours. But, like the old war-horse which scents the battle from afar, he seemed to recover all his energies at the sound of arms ; and, by the beginning of the new year (1857), he was busily engaged in despatching from Bombay the second division of his force for the Persian War.

But it was not long before Henry Lawrence was offered by Lord Canning a post for which he was, perhaps, even better fitted than the command in Persia. He had, for four years past, been struggling to infuse some of his vital force into the effete princes of Rajpootana, and sighing over their impracticability and their passive resistance. And the news that he had been offered and had accepted the Chief Commissionership of the newly annexed province of Oude reached John Lawrence as he was returning to Lahore from Peshawur, in the beginning of February. It seemed to be a post exactly suited to him, and one, perchance, in which he might be able to carry out, without let or hindrance, those generous schemes for easing the transition from native to British rule, in which he had been, as he imagined, so much thwarted in the Punjab. At all events, there would be no Board here, and no brotherly heart-burnings in his way. He had, as he said himself, 'some five or six different diseases about him,' but he, at once, gave up his intention of returning to England. Health and vigour seemed to come back at a bound, as they had done to Sir James Outram ; and having first stipulated with Lord Canning that his elder brother George should succeed him in the post he was vacating, he set out for Rajpootana at once.

But he was unaccompanied in this, the last migration, as it was to prove, of his travel-worn life, by his faithful companion who had shared with him the pang of parting from the Punjab, and was now resting for ever from the work and the worry, the aspirations and the disappointments of Indian life, beneath the pleasant shades of Mount Aboo.

Whether it was Henry Lawrence himself, who, conscious of his own deficiencies as a civil administrator, wrote to his brother John, asking him to suggest anything that might be a help to him in his new office ; or whether it was John who, fearing that the defects of method which had made his brother's life a burden to him in the Board, might reappear, with worse results now that he stood alone,

as Chief Commissioner, in Oude, determined, unasked, to play the part of Mentor to him,—I have been unable to discover. But a long extract from a letter containing such hints has come into my hands, and I quote it here as one more illustration, alike of the differences between the brothers, and of the true brotherly feeling which—as suggestive in what it says as in what it omits to say—had, once again, thrown those differences into the shade:—

February 18, 1857.

. . . . Now, as regards official matters: I would say, give no orders to Commissioners or District officers, except in an emergency, direct; when you do so, send a copy to the Judicial Commissioner or Financial Commissioner, as the case may be. If you do this, you secure the best chance of their working with you. It is sufficiently difficult to get men to be subordinate. By letting them ignore their immediate superiors, you put wind into their heads, and complicate matters. Talk to the subordinate officers as much as you like, and indicate in this way your general views, but send orders through the regular channels. Even your friends will resent your writing direct to their subordinates. Secondly, if petitions come to you, and you wish to save time, you can, without any harm, refer them direct to the local officers. But then, in doing so, you should tell them to reply through their superiors. Thus, a man says his village is over-assessed and so forth. You send it to the Deputy Commissioner of the District for information, which he will send up to his Commissioner, who will send it on with his views. By this plan some delay occurs, but work, when so done, is done once for all. I would also take up such complaints very sparingly. Every native likes to go to the top sawyer, and it is only by close examination and cross-questioning that the truth comes out, and, even then, not always. When men petition me, the first thing I ask is, 'Have you been to the Deputy Commissioner?' 'Yes.' If they are still dissatisfied, 'Have you been to the Commissioner?' and so on. If this has also been done, then I ask for a copy of the final order. If it is not forthcoming, I usually refer them to the proper court. If I think, however, that anything bad has occurred, then I write and request information.

A Chief Commissioner has not much direct power, but a good deal of indirect influence. He cannot reverse judicial sentences, for instance, but he can question their legality or propriety. He can direct that they be reconsidered; or if this be refused, which of course it would not be, he can refer to Government. In administrative matters he has most power. In all matters of general arrangement his voice would generally be decisive. It is not easy to say on what points hitches and difficulties will arise. Do what you will, arise they will. The great rule seems to me to consist in not deciding before you have both sides of the question,

as far as possible, before you. There is too much writing and reference to Government. One has not sufficient time to think and digest. The mechanical work to be got through occupies the whole day.

The work here has vastly increased since you left. I am often fairly bewildered with it, though I work at the desk steadily from the minute I come in before breakfast—with an interval of ten minutes for breakfast—until dusk, or, at any rate, until I can no longer see. I never take a holiday, or knock off even for an hour. The Public Works Department has added to the business immensely. It, at present, occupies half my time. I tried to carry on as well as I could, so as gradually to get things into order, and to work out what was necessary to be done. I have failed, however, to a great extent. While the Engineers attack me for my interference, the Government and the Court assail me for not keeping them in order! The expenditure has been excessive, and the consequence is, that now we are hauled up and fairly muzzled; and not being able to do anything or spend anything without going through the regular routine, even in an emergency, I have to report to Government and show cause for having sanctioned 1,000 Rs. which has not previously appeared in the Budget.

I do not recollect anything else which strikes me as worthy of note. The only point in particular which seems to me of value is your mode of doing your own work. In civil administration, the great secret appears to me to consist in avoiding arrears. To do this, you must always keep at the wheel, and endeavour, as far as possible, to work off daily all which comes in. Though, in the whole year, you may get through all your work, much will depend on its being done in the way I describe. Your own office-people cannot get through it properly unless it comes in and goes out like a running stream; and this is still more important for the working of the subordinate departments. Before a work or a system is set a-going, try and give your orders; if you cannot do so, better as far as possible accept those of others, even if it do not altogether accord with your own ideas.

We had a good deal of trouble with the Dost. He struck me as thoroughly untrustworthy. He looks old and feeble, but very astute. . . . His men are stout fellows, but have no drill and are badly armed and equipped. Their pay just keeps them from starving and no more. I bought up all the accoutrements of H.M. 87th Regiment for 300 Rs. and odd, and gave them to Sirdar Azim, to his great delight. The Afghans seem to think that strength consists in such things.

A letter to Lord Canning, written about the same time, and asking that an Engineer officer might be attached to his office, as Secretary in the Public Works Department, gives some additional details respecting the growth of his work as Chief Commissioner, that Sisy-

phæan stone which it was his duty and his pride to keep always rolling. The more enthusiastically, in fact, that he and his subordinates threw themselves into their work, in order that they might keep abreast of its requirements, the more the field seemed to widen out before them; and, rightly judged, it was, perhaps, their highest reward that it should be so.

Such an officer (writes John Lawrence) would prove of immense assistance to me. Since I was made Chief Commissioner in the Punjab, the work has increased by fully one-half. In three years, the letters received in my office have increased from 8,144 per annum to 10,502; those issued from 9,093 to 13,964. These are exclusive of enclosures and demi-official letters. In 1856, I disposed of 1,500 cases of rent-free tenures myself, an amount of work which in Bengal or the North-West Provinces, where similar investigations were going on, would have occupied the time of one or two Commissioners at least. My pen is scarcely ever out of my hand. I have no complaint to make. So long as I can do it, I will continue working, but any arrangement which gave me some relief would prove very acceptable. And the one I now propose would do this. It would also make me more useful, by giving me time for reflection, time to digest many of the important measures which I have to take up. The arrangement would not cost the Government a rupee.

The months of February and March 1857 were spent by John Lawrence in administrative labours in the north and north-west of his province, at Rawulpindi, Shahpore, Jhung, and Futtehpore Gogaira, and he reached Lahore on March 27. Unfortunately there is a gap in his correspondence for six weeks from this time, which I have been unable, by appeals to the recollections of his friends, satisfactorily to fill up. His health was bad. He suffered terribly from neuralgia, and, on one occasion, he so far gave in to the pressure put upon him by the doctors as to talk of returning to England for a time, and to write to Montgomery, whom he wished to make his *locum tenens*, on the duties of his office.

We know now, well enough, from other sources, what had been going on in the bazaars and the cantonments, among Muslims and Hindus alike, during this critical period. We know that 'the little cloud, no bigger than a man's hand,' of which Lord Canning had spoken on his departure from England, had already risen above the horizon, and, unnoticed or only half noticed by anyone in authority, was beginning to overspread the firmament. How little John Lawrence himself can have anticipated the storm which was about to

burst over India, we may gather from the fact that he was now, once more, contemplating a visit to Cashmere, that he communicated his wishes to Lord Canning, and that it was only the reply of the Governor-General, that, possibly, his services might be urgently required nearer home, which led him once more to forego his purpose.

True enough it was that there had been symptoms of something brewing, of something, as the saying is, 'in the air,' which had appeared with the beginning of the new year in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, and had, by this time, been observed at Umballa, a thousand miles away on the edge of the Himalayas and within the limits of John Lawrence's own province. There had been those mysterious 'chupatties,' pancakes of flour and water, which meant no one quite knew what, and had passed on, no one quite knew how, from village to village, and from district to district throughout the North-West Provinces. There were placards proclaiming the *Jehad* or Holy War in the name of God and of the Prophet, which had been nailed to the Jumma Musjid in Delhi, under the very noses of the British authorities. There had been weird prophecies which, passing from mouth to mouth, and losing nothing in the process, told of coming disaster to the Feringhis. There had been incendiary fires, blazing forth with ominous frequency in the cantonments, which were only outward and visible signs of other and fiercer fires which were smouldering and struggling within the Sepoys' hearts. Finally, there was the substitution of the Enfield rifle for the Brown Bess, and of the lubricated for the ordinary cartridge, which, whether by our fate or by our fault, had brought to a head all those vague and unreasoning fears which the extinction of native dynasties and the annexation of native states, the ousting of talukdars and the resumption of jagheers, the introduction of 'fire-carriages' and of 'lightning-posts,'—in short, every step in the 'moral and material progress' of India, had, each and all, some more, some less, some here, some there, contributed to awaken in the breasts of our pampered and ignorant and suspicious Sepoys.

The cartridges served out to them, lubricated, as they thought, with the fat of the cow, the sacred animal of the Hindus, and of the pig, the unclean animal of the Mohammedans, were, at once, a cause and a symptom of the fast-spreading panic; for they furnished one more, and, as it seemed, a crowning proof of the blow which Government was insidiously preparing to strike at the most sacred feelings and institutions of both sections of the community. Panic is always blind. It grows by what it feeds on, by the operation of the medi-

cines which are administered to check its growth, no less than by its natural food. Proclamations and apologies and concessions, if they tended, momentarily, to allay the symptoms of the rising terror, only served, ultimately, to increase its strength. To demonstrate, as one kind-hearted General after another attempted to do to his bewildered troops, the absurdity of their fears, was only to give one proof the more of their reality; and so from Dumdum and Barrackpore, in the neighbourhood of the capital of India, the smouldering mischief spread to Agra, the capital of the North-Western Provinces; to Meerut, the largest military station in Hindustan, and the strongest in European troops of all arms; to Delhi, the capital of the Mogul, where his effete representative was dozing away the last hours of his reign and of his life; and so on, to Umballa, one of the chief depôts for 'instruction in musketry'—in the fatal art, that is, which, if it helped the Sepoys to kill their enemies, must needs first, they thought, ruin those who practised it, both in body and soul.

What booted it that warnings, punishments, modifications, explanations, and denials followed one after another in rapid and bewildering succession? What booted it that the 19th Native Infantry regiment, which had mutinied at Berhampore in February, was disbanded; that the fanatic 'Pandy' of the 34th Native Infantry, who had made a murderous assault on an English officer at Barrackpore, was hanged; and that the seven companies who had been silent and passive, if not sympathising spectators of his deed, were disbanded also? What booted it that the obnoxious grease had been analysed and found to be harmless; that it was, henceforward, to be mixed by the Sepoys themselves from ingredients which they themselves should be at liberty to choose; that they were bidden to tear off, and no longer to bite off, the end of the cartridge—to touch, that is, and no longer to taste the unclean thing? 'Touch not, taste not, handle not,' was still the cry of the poor panic-stricken Sepoy. The accursed thing which the Government had been driven to remove from them in one shape, it was determined, they thought, in their blind unreasoning terror, to force back on them in another. If they were no longer obliged to touch the greased cartridge with their hands, the very flour which they were eating had been mixed, as they believed, by their insidious enemies with the bone-dust of the same forbidden animals! They would henceforward be looked upon—in fact, they were already looked upon by their more fortunate comrades, who had not been thought worthy of the honour of handling the Enfield

rifle—as outcasts, with all that that most horrible of names implied in this and in the other world.

With what bitter irony must the words of Lord Dalhousie's farewell Minute, 'Hardly any circumstance of the condition of the Sepoy is in need of improvement,' have sounded now in the ears of his successor, when he woke up to the consciousness that a mutiny of the whole Bengal army was not only not beyond the range of possibilities, but that it was a stern and imminent reality! Strange indeed, we may think it, that Lord Dalhousie had been able so to write, hardly more than a year before; and stranger still it must seem that a panic so real, so wide-spread, so intractable as that which I have described, should have taken possession of the whole Bengal army, and yet not have awakened the fears of each and all of those who were, in any way, responsible for the safety of India. But so it was. Vague intimations, indeed, of impending danger, grounded on the general condition of our Indian army, on the reduced numbers of the British force, and on our neglect of the most ordinary precautions, may be discovered in the writings of Sir Charles Napier, of Sir Henry Lawrence, of Sir James Outram, and of Sir John Lawrence. But no Indian official, military or civilian, seems to have imagined the possibility of what was actually about to happen. All were equally taken by surprise when the Mutiny broke out.

What happened at Umballa, within the precincts of John Lawrence's own province, may be taken as a sample of that which was taking place elsewhere. There was at Umballa a detachment of the 36th Native Infantry, a regiment which formed part of the escort of General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief, who was, at that time, engaged on a tour of inspection. When he approached Umballa, on his way to Simla, the non-commissioned officers of the detachment went forth to greet their comrades. They were received with averted looks. The *lotah* and the *hookah* were refused them; they were, in fact, treated as outcasts, and returned to their detachments ruined men! Their story spread like wildfire through the other detachments at the musketry school, and reached the ears of the sympathising musketry instructor, Captain Martineau. It was no news to him. 'We cannot,' he wrote, 'point out mutiny as likely to break forth here or there; for we all agree in seeing it everywhere.'

But, unfortunately, all did not agree in seeing it everywhere, and, among those who saw it least, was the Commander-in-Chief himself. He addressed the detachments kindly enough, told them that there

were great misconceptions afloat about the cartridges, and, possibly, for the moment, succeeded in convincing them that they were misconceptions. They thanked him, but told him, respectfully, that for one man who would disbelieve the stories, there were ten thousand who believed them firmly. They were willing, if he ordered them to do so, not only to handle, but to fire the objectionable cartridge, but they implored him to spare them such utter social and spiritual ruin. He took time to consider the case, and held council by letter with the Governor-General. It was a choice of evils ; and no doubt those high authorities chose what seemed to them to be the lesser of the two. The cartridges were to be handled and fired by the Sepoys. And the Commander-in-Chief went further, and visited with sharp censure, not only, as it was, perhaps, right he should, the men who had taunted their comrades with loss of caste, but the unhappy officers who had shrunk from and resented the imputation.

The Sepoys obeyed the order, but the incendiary fires which burst out again that night with redoubled vigour in all parts of the cantonments showed, plainly enough, what their feelings were. Still, apparently believing that he had allayed the storm, the Commander-in-Chief passed on to his cool summer retreat at Simla. And if the Commander-in Chief, who was going in and out among the troops from day to day, and was directly responsible for their well-being and fidelity, saw no danger of a formidable outbreak, we can hardly wonder that the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, whose relations to them were only indirect, who could only know what he was told, and had abundance of work of his own to do, saw little danger either, or at least failed to perceive its imminence or its urgency.

Sir John Lawrence was in bad health ; he had already lingered at Lahore beyond the time when it was safe for him to do so ; and, on his way to Murri, he turned aside with his brother Richard to Sealkote, which, like Umballa, had been selected as a depôt for the new musketry instruction, in order that he might judge for himself of the feelings of the Sepoys, and see how the rifle practice was getting on. The result was reassuring, and he communicated his impressions to Lord Canning in a letter written from the spot, on May 4. Its statements are invested with a painfully dramatic interest when we remember that, before he wrote again, the outbreak had already taken place. In the school, he said, were detachments from most of the Punjab corps, all being trained in the new system. Some were learning to handle, others to fire the rifle, and all of them were,

to all appearance, highly pleased with a weapon which would enable them to kill an enemy at a thousand instead of a hundred yards' distance, and which seemed particularly suited to their mountain warfare. On the morning of the same day, he had gone to the butts with the Brigadier, and had watched the Regular Infantry also quietly practising. He had made particular inquiries among the officers, and they all, with one accord, affirmed that no ill-feeling had been shown. Speaking for himself, he had perceived no hesitation on the part of anybody, and had given the Brigadier six small scarves to be shot for as prizes at the end of the course! Before the course was finished, those same Sepoys were to be found shooting at other targets, and with other prizes in view than the scarves which had been so kindly offered by the Chief Commissioner.

Sir John Lawrence left Sealkote and passed on to Rawul Pindi. He was on the point of starting thence for Murri, when, on May 12, came the fateful telegram from Delhi, which electrified the Punjab and altered his summer destination: 'The Sepoys,' it ran, 'have come in from Meerut, and are burning everything. Mr. Todd is dead, and we hear several Europeans. We must shut up.' In other words, the Indian Mutiny had broken out, and Delhi, the seat of the Mogul and the historic capital of India, was in the hands of the mutineers.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE HOUR AND THE MAN.

MAY-JUNE 1857.

THE story of the Indian Mutiny is a thrice-told tale, and one which, in spite of its romantic interest and the labour which I have necessarily spent in studying it as a whole, I have no intention of attempting to tell here again. My task, as the biographer of Sir John Lawrence, is more limited, but, perhaps, not less difficult. It is to restrict myself, as rigidly as possible, to the history of those movements, which, inspired by his energy, controlled by his prudence, and carried out by his resolution and that of his lieutenants, first, secured from imminent danger the province over which he ruled, then made it the storehouse, the arsenal, the recruiting ground, the base of operations for much that was done outside of it, and, lastly, led up to the crowning achievement of his life—it might have been the crowning achievement of any life—the siege and capture of Delhi. The siege of Delhi, indeed, under all its circumstances, in the historic interest attaching to the city, in the strength, the numbers and the resources of the besieged, in the weakness, the privations, and the difficulties of the handful of men who, perched on a ridge at one corner of its vast circumference, with their rear and both their flanks exposed to attack, called themselves its 'besiegers,' finally, in the momentous stake involved in the success or the abandonment of the operations, stands forth with few parallels in modern history.

Even thus limited, the field which I have to attempt to cover is sufficiently vast. The chief actors in it are so commanding and their deeds are performed in so many widely scattered places, and with such varying degrees of responsibility and power, that it will be a task of no slight difficulty—perhaps the greatest of all my difficulties—to group them, in proper relief and in their due proportions, round the man whom, whether they agreed with or differed from him, whether they deemed him too cautious or too impetuous, too merciful

or too severe, too self-sufficing or too ready to listen to what everyone had to urge, all alike recognised as their ruling spirit; as one whose character, whose judgment, and whose will were felt instinctively by all to be the best security that everything which he willed, or decided, or did—whether it commended itself to their judgment or not—would, in the long run, turn out right.

Before the Mutiny had run its course, but after its crisis had come and gone, an application reached Sir John Lawrence from the Resident at Berar, asking him for a few hints as to his system. 'It is not our system,' he sent back word, 'it is our men.' And it was the men whom his brother and he himself had first brought together, and then kept together by the methods I have described in previous chapters; the men whom he had recognised, in spite of all their angularity, as having 'grit' or 'backbone' in them; who, now, in the time of trial, instinct with his spirit, and with his simple-minded devotion to the public service, rose to the emergency, were not afraid to face responsibility, and, each in his respective sphere, very often in utter ignorance of what was being done by others, contributed his part towards the great deliverance.

What, then, we may ask, first, were the resources of the Punjab? For such, we may be sure, was the question which crossed and recrossed the mind of the Chief Commissioner when, on receipt of the startling message at Rawul Pindi, he consumed, as I have mentioned in the first chapter of this biography, his own thoughts in silence, pondering the full magnitude of the danger, and the means by which he might best meet and overcome it.

The Punjab was the frontier province of our empire, and, as such, it had a larger force—European and native—than, perhaps, any five other provinces in India taken together. The European force consisted, in round numbers, of twelve regiments—of about, that is, eleven thousand men. The Hindustani force, who were chiefly Regulars, numbered thirty-six thousand, and the Punjabi local force, chiefly Irregulars, fourteen thousand men. An enormous army this! But was it a source of weakness or of strength? It will be observed that the Hindustani force, over which there was reason to think that the spirit of mutiny and discontent had already, in great part, spread, was half as large again as the European and the Punjabi taken together. The Latin proverb, 'the more slaves, the more enemies,' was therefore one which, *mutatis mutandis*, might be applied with as much truth to the pampered Sepoys of the Punjab, as to the down-

trodden Roman slaves. And if this were so, then, our enemies under arms in the Punjab, and trained by ourselves, outnumbered the Europeans in the proportion of three to one!

But what of the Irregulars? were they staunch or not? If staunch, the province might be able to hold its own till succour came from without; if not, the game was clearly up. The chances must have seemed to the eager and anxious mind of the Chief Commissioner, as they seem to us now, when we judge by the event, almost equally balanced. On the one hand, were the memories of the Khalsa and of Runjeet Sing, of Ferozeshah and Chillianwallah, hardly as yet ten years old. There was the gulf not yet bridged over —even if there was no active feeling of hostility—between the dark-skinned native and the fair-skinned and intruding foreigner. There were the dispossessed, and, therefore, necessarily, in some degree, dsscontented nobles. There were thousands of Sikh warriors, now peacefully cultivating their fields, but men whose right hands had, assuredly, not forgotten their cunning, and in whom the cry of 'The Guru and the Khalsa!' might yet stir yearnings unutterable, and rally them to the battle-field. On the other hand, there was the grand fact that the country was peaceful, was prosperous, was contented, and that it had been governed by the Lawrence brothers, during the past eight years, as few countries have ever been governed. There was the hatred of the Sikh for the Mohammedan who had persecuted him, and whom he had persecuted in turn. There was the contempt of the hardy Punjabi, whatever his caste or his creed, for the less manly races of Oude or Bengal. Finally, there was the hope of plundering the revolted city, the home of the Mogul, under the *Ikbal* of the Company.

And how was the army, whose component parts I have just described, distributed? The European part of it, on which alone, in the first instance, we could place our full reliance, was massed chiefly on two points: first, at or near Umballa, on what had been our frontier line before the conquest of the Punjab; and, secondly, at or near Peshawur, our most advanced outpost towards Afghanistan. At Umballa and the adjoining stations there were four, and in the Peshawur valley three out of the whole number of twelve European regiments. But even at these two most favoured points, the European troops were considerably outnumbered by the Hindustani. At Lahore, at Rawul Pindi, at Ferozepore, at Jullundur, and at Hoshiarpore, the disproportion was greater still; while at Umritsur, Sealkote,

Goordaspore, Jhelum, and Mooltan, there were either no European troops at all, or they formed quite an insignificant fraction of the whole. As for the Irregular force, the most critical element in the coming struggle, they were distributed impartially along the frontier of six hundred miles, from Huzara to Mithancote; and since the annexation they had been, as we have seen, sufficiently employed in rendering that difficult country secure from the raids of the robber tribes outside of it. And even if they should prove staunch to us, the question still remained whether to withdraw them from the frontier and employ them elsewhere, would not be to call down upon us other and greater dangers from beyond. Of two regiments belonging to the Irregulars, special mention should be made here. At Hoti Murdan was the famous Guide Corps under Daly, who, as experience had shown, and was soon to show again, were ready to go anywhere and do anything in our defence; while at the frontier posts, above Peshawur, was another regiment, called from the conspicuous valour which it had shown in the defence of Khelat-i-Ghilzai, in the first Afghan war, the Khelat-i-Ghilzais—and who, like the Guides, might, it was hoped, be depended on to do equally good service now. Once more, besides these, there was the Military Police—the Lahore division of them, under the command of Richard Lawrence, 'Dick's Invincibles,' as his brother used to call them. They were a body of men some fifteen thousand strong, who, being drawn from much the same classes as the Irregulars, might be expected to go with them, whether for us or against us.

There was thus, it will be seen, no single place of importance in the Punjab which could be looked upon, at the moment of the outbreak, as beyond the reach of anxiety. But if there was no point of danger which was held by a force on whom we could depend, neither was there any which was without at least one man on whom full reliance might be placed, a man and not a machine, one who would do all that was practicable, and, perhaps, not a little that seemed impracticable, in our defence. At Lahore were Montgomery and Macleod, Arthur Roberts, the Commissioner, Richard Lawrence, the Chief of the Police, James Macpherson, the Military Secretary, each of them a host in himself, and each of them, it will be remembered, either bred up in the school, or the warm, personal friend of the Chief Commissioner. At Peshawur, the most dangerous place of all, were Edwardes, the Commissioner, Nicholson, the Deputy Commissioner, and Sydney Cotton, in command of the Regulars. At

Kohat and, happily, within hail of the Peshawur authorities, was the Brigadier of the frontier force, and the hero of a score of frontier fights, Neville Chamberlain. At Mooltan were Hamilton, the Commissioner, and Crawford Chamberlain, the Commandant of the First Irregular Cavalry, better known as Skinner's Horse. Over the Trans-Sutlej territory presided Lake, over the Cis-Sutlej, Barnes, both of them men after John Lawrence's own heart. At Ferozepore, were Marsden, and Van Cortlandt of Khalsa fame; at Umritsur, Cooper; at Umballa, Forsyth; at Jhelum, Brown; at Loodiana, the most turbulent of cities, Ricketts; at Jullundur, Farrington; at Kangra, Reynell Taylor. Finally, at Rawul Pindi was Edward Thornton, the Commissioner of the District, and at the same place, as luck would have it, the great civilian chieftain, with his soldier's heart, who was thence, during the first three months of the Mutiny, to sweep his whole province with his searching glance, to hold it in his iron grasp, and as time passed on, wielding, by his own inherent force of character, no less than by the irresistible march of events, almost the powers of the Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in one, was to praise and to condemn, to punish and to reward, to command and to forbid, to stimulate every enterprise, to sanction every appointment, to direct every movement of troops, from the gloomy portals of the Khyber even to the ridge before Delhi.

The absence of Sir John Lawrence from Lahore served to throw the responsibility and the credit of dealing the first and most decisive blow at the rising mutiny, on those he had left behind him there. Perhaps it was well that it was so. Perhaps it was also well that the telegraphic communication between Lahore and Rawul Pindi was interrupted for the time, and that the message which flashed to the capital of the Punjab early on Tuesday morning, May 12, the news of the capture of Delhi by the mutineers, did not reach the Chief Commissioner by the same route. For it was these difficulties of communication which entitled or compelled his subordinates to act at the outset, as he himself was entitled and compelled, shortly afterwards, to act on a wider field—at once and with decision,—and so gave, at the very beginning of the Mutiny, a splendid example of what could be done by men who were not afraid of that bugbear of officials everywhere—the bugbear of responsibility.

The mantle of John Lawrence had fallen, for the time, on his chief lieutenant and his life-long friend, Robert Montgomery; and by no possibility, as I have said before, could it have fallen on

worthier shoulders, or on a man who, by his knowledge of the country and of the natives, of the points of danger and of the sources of our strength, above all, by the idiosyncrasies of his own character, was better able to deal with the emergency. Whatever Montgomery did he did quickly, with decision, with a will. If he did not care to estimate all the difficulties which encompassed a particular course of action, it is certain that, by not doing so, he often succeeded in brushing them out of his path. John Lawrence, on the contrary, with all his 'vast vigour and resolution,' was, by nature, cautious and circumspect, so cautious and so circumspect that his enemies have endeavoured to make capital out of it. He liked to turn a thing over in his mind, to be sure that he saw all that was to be said for or against it, before he decided. He could, on emergencies, think very quickly, but he preferred to think at leisure. He 'never acted on mere impulse.' He used to remark that though, while deliberating on a difficult question, he often changed his mind, he generally came back, at last, to the view which he had taken instinctively at first. And thus, in cases of real emergency, he was able to act at once with a feeling of greater confidence than is generally the case with men of his habit of mind. Now, on the momentous question which came before Montgomery and his friends, on that eventful morning, it is hardly conceivable that, bound as Sir John Lawrence was to look beyond Lahore to the safety of his whole province, and, beyond that again, to the safety of the empire, he would not have felt more misgiving than they appear to have done; and it is certain that when he first heard of the disarmament, he was inclined, in spite of its success, to question its wisdom. It is highly characteristic of his absolute honesty of mind that he expressed his doubt on the subject. If it is true with most people, that 'nothing succeeds like success,' it was not, in his mind at all events, the whole truth. 'Montgomery has done,' exclaimed a high authority at the Head-quarters of the army, when he first heard of the disarmament, 'either the wisest or the most foolish thing in the world.' And the utterance, if it was oracular, was also strictly true. What might not have been the result, if the Sepoys at Lahore had refused to lay down their arms, and, rising in open mutiny, had, some few of them, been cut down at once, while the remainder scattered broadcast over the country, carrying with them the flames of violence and war? In that case, the evil we most dreaded would have been precipitated upon us by our own precautions. There would have been no time to send messengers to

the more remote stations in the Punjab to warn them of what was coming; and the Sepoys of Mooltan, and of half-a-dozen other important places, in which the Europeans were few in number, seeing that the case had been prejudged against them at Lahore, and feeling that their turn would come next, would have anticipated the evil day, and rising in all parts of the country, have given themselves one chance more. The question, indeed, in those early days, whether it was better to appear to shut our eyes to the mutinous feelings of the Sepoys, or to arouse them further, to show our suspicions or to conceal them, was a question on which there might well be great differences of opinion, and it was as fortunate for the Punjab that it possessed a chief ruler who, with his wider responsibilities, would have thought twice before he made the first plunge, as that it had others, in the positions next below his, who, seeing the immediate danger, determined, without the hesitation of an hour, to be the first to strike the blow. Again and again, in the course of the mutiny, did this momentous question come to the front. And it is to be noticed that while officers in command of regiments were, from the most honourable feelings, almost always for delay, and for trusting their men to the end, the civilians, with John Lawrence at their head, were almost always for immediate action. The difficulties, indeed, of making a decision were greatly lessened when once the ice had been broken, and the success of the first attempt at Lahore was an omen—valuable not to the superstitious or the over-anxious alone—of the ultimate result.

The story of the disarmament has been often told before, but it has so important an influence on everything that followed, and is so characteristic of the men whom it was the delight of the Chief Commissioner to gather round him and to honour, that I must indicate its general outlines. The telegram from Delhi reached Lahore early in the morning of May 12, and Montgomery, before the secret had oozed out, at once summoned the chief civil officers to a Council. There was no time for delay; for secret information had reached him, through Richard Lawrence, that all four regiments in the great cantonment at Mean Meer, five miles distant, were prepared to follow the example of their Delhi brethren, whatever it might be. 'Sahib, they are up to this in it,' said a trusty Brahmin clerk who had been commissioned to enquire into their feelings as they strolled into the city to his master, Richard Lawrence, and, as he spoke, he significantly laid his finger on his throat. This was enough for Montgomery,

and a motion was brought forward and unanimously agreed to by the Council, that it was desirable that the Sepoy regiments should be at once deprived of their gun-caps and ammunition. But the Civil officers had no authority in such a matter, and so Montgomery and Macpherson rode over to Mean Meer to urge the necessity for action on the Brigadier in command. General Corbett was, at first, naturally taken aback at the boldness of the proposal, but, to his infinite credit, in the course of the afternoon, he made up his mind to go even further, and to deprive his troops not merely of their ammunition, but of their arms.

A ball was to be given, that very night, to the officers of the one European regiment in the station, and as profound secrecy was essential to the success of the intended disarmament, it was not postponed. A dreary amusement enough the dance must have seemed to those few officers who were in the secret, and who felt that they must pass at the dawn of day from the ball-room to the parade-ground, which might well prove their grave! The thoughts of one and of another may well have leapt back to that other ball-room at Brussels, which heard 'the cannon's opening roar' and ushered in the crowning victory of Waterloo.

A general parade had been ordered, in the usual course, for the morning of the 13th, and Montgomery and Macleod, Macpherson and Roberts, Richard Lawrence, Robert Egerton and Hutchinson, rode over to the ground, prepared to witness the successful execution of the bold step decided on by Corbett, or to be among the first to fall if it should miscarry. The Sepoy force consisted of three regiments of foot, the 16th, the 26th, and the 49th, and of one light cavalry regiment, the 8th. The Europeans who were to disarm them consisted of five companies only of a single regiment, the 81st, with twelve guns. The Sepoy regiments appeared on the ground, quite unconscious that there was anything unusual in preparation. A simple manœuvre brought them face to face with the Europeans, and made it dangerously easy for them to count their foes. While they were thus drawn up, a Staff officer read aloud to them the orders of the Brigadier. He praised them heartily for their past conduct, but ended by announcing that, as an evil spirit seemed to be abroad in the Indian army, it had been thought advisable to save them from others—and, it might be from themselves, by taking from them—their arms. While he was still speaking, the five hundred Europeans fell back between the guns which had hitherto been concealed behind them, and left the Sepoy

regiments to look down the twelve black throats of the cannon, which were already loaded with grape, while the gunners stood by with port-fires lighted. Just as he ceased to speak, the word of command, 'Eighty-first, load!' rang clearly forth. It was a thrilling moment, a moment in which half a lifetime must have seemed to pass. There was, it is said, a slight hesitation, but the ringing of the ramrods as the charges were rammed home, spoke eloquently in favour of obedience, and so some two thousand muskets, and some seven hundred sabres soon lay piled upon the ground. The Sepoy garrison of the fort which commands Lahore was disarmed, at almost the same moment, by three companies of the same 81st Regiment, and the capital of the Punjab was safe from the mutineers. The whole of the responsibility for these measures rested with Brigadier Corbett, and to him, therefore, must be assigned the chief share of the credit.

Nor were Corbett and Montgomery content to secure Lahore alone. Before the day so big with the destinies of the Punjab—and if of the Punjab, then of India—had come to an end, a company of the same valiant regiment, which, without the firing of a single gun, or the shedding of a single drop of blood, had disarmed seven times their number, was speeding away in native carts, which had been hastily collected, to Umritsur. Close to Umritsur and commanding it was Govindghur, a fort named after Govind, the famous Guru. Hard by, was the Golden Temple and the Pool of Immortality. The whole place thus served as a rallying point to the Sikh nation, whether we regard them as the conquering commonwealth of the Khalsa or as the enthusiastic votaries of a reformed creed. Hence its supreme importance. Govindghur was held by a native garrison, but before the next morning dawned, the English troops had traversed the thirty intervening miles, and were safely ensconced within its walls.

On the day preceding the disarmament at Lahore, trusty messengers had been sent out by the ready hand and head of Montgomery to Ferozepore, which was one of the largest arsenals in India; to Mooltan, which, with its important trade and the historic reputation of its citadel, was guarded by only one company of European artillery; and to the fort of Kangra, on the influence of which among the mountain tribes of the far north, I have already had occasion to dwell. Thus, within forty-eight hours of the receipt of the news from Delhi, Lahore and Umritsur had been saved, the garrisons of Govindghur and Ferozepore strengthened, Mooltan and Kangra warned!

Nor was Montgomery's attention confined to the great towns and arsenals. Messengers were despatched in every direction to the small civil stations scattered over the country, bidding the officers send in all their treasure to the nearest military station under the escort of Punjabi police, to distrust the Hindustani guards, to stop all Sepoys' letters passing through the Post Office. 'Whilst acting vigorously,' so he summed up his admirable and spirit-stirring instructions, 'and being alive to the great importance of the crisis, I would earnestly suggest calmness and quietude. There should be no signs of alarm or excitement. But be prepared to act, and have the best information from every source at your disposal. Sir John Lawrence being absent from Lahore, till he arrives, I should wish that, every day or two, a few lines should be sent to me informing me of the state of feeling in your district, &c. &c. I have full reliance on your zeal and discretion in this important crisis.'

Well might Sir John Lawrence, writing, a few days later, to the man who had so spoken and written and acted on his behalf, say, in a burst of genuine enthusiasm, which was rare in him, except when a piece of extraordinarily good work called it forth, 'Your Lahore men have done nobly. I should like to embrace them; Donald, Roberts, Mac (Macpherson), and Dick are, all of them, *pucca* trumps,'—one of his very highest terms of praise. And, in more dignified phrases, he wrote officially, 'Mr. Montgomery, neglecting no precaution, admits of no alarm, and inspires all with confidence and zeal. . . . Indeed,' he continues, 'all officers, civil and military, are displaying that calmness and energy which, under such circumstances, might be expected from English gentlemen, and are a sufficient guarantee that all that is practicable will be effected by them.'

'And how, meanwhile, was it faring with Sir John Lawrence himself? The first telegram, containing the news of the outbreak at Meerut, reached him early on the morning of Tuesday, the 12th, while he was still in bed. He had been suffering terribly from neuralgia for the last two months, and, on the previous evening, the doctor had rubbed his temples with aconite in order to relieve the intensity of the pain. 'It is a deadly poison,' says John Lawrence, writing to Edwardes on the 13th, 'and in the night it worked into my eye and I was nearly blinded.' Such was his condition when the news came. But Lady Lawrence well remembers how, worn out with pain and sleeplessness as he was, he at once left his bed, and sent off telegrams and letters in every direction. After breakfast,

Edward Thornton, the Commissioner of the Division, looked in, and while he was conversing with his chief, and while Lady Lawrence and her niece were in the act of pouring a lotion into the injured eye —little wonder is it that the most trivial circumstances of such an epoch-making moment impressed themselves indelibly on the minds of those who were present—the second and more fateful telegram, containing the news of the capture of Delhi and the murder of the Europeans, was brought in and read aloud. The conversation was cut short. It was a time for thought and not for words. For the telegram, rightly apprehended, brought the news that a local outbreak of discontented Sepoys, which might have been stamped out by vigorous measures on the part of General Hewett, who commanded the Brigade at Meerut, had, by his fatal vacillation, been transferred to Delhi and had been transformed into a vast political revolution, which aimed at nothing less than the empire of India. No record has reached my hands of what John Lawrence thought, or said, or wrote on the rest of that eventful day. But the upshot of it all may be seen in the masterly batch of letters, extraordinary alike in their quality and in their quantity, which he wrote, on the following day, to the Commander-in-Chief at Simla, to the Commissioner at Peshawur, to the Brigadier-General at Peshawur, to the Brigadier in command of the Frontier force, and to the Governor-General. They lie before me in one of his big folio volumes, and show that, without having held personal communication with anyone, he was already master of the situation.

His first duty was to secure the safety of his own province; but the immediate steps towards that end were already being taken, unknown to him, by Montgomery at Lahore, and, with his full knowledge and consent, by Edwardes and Nicholson at Peshawur. His second duty, and hardly second in his own mind, as his telegrams and letters show, was to make his province the means of retaking Delhi. The tendency of official life—if a man be not a really great man—is to narrow the intellect, to make him take an official view of everything, to enslave him to the maxims or traditions of some petty clique or some strong-minded chief. In India this is, perhaps, less the case than in some countries which are nearer home. There, if anywhere, it may be truly said that 'none are for a party and all are for the state,' but, even in India, the tendency may be observed. 'He sat at the feet of so-and-so,' is a phrase which we read till we are tired of it, in the writings of Anglo-Indian historians and essayists.

But it is the confession of a fact. It is, perhaps, inevitable that it should be so. Things are done on so vast a scale in India, the sphere of even a District-officer is so wide, the work to be done is so far beyond his utmost energies, he has so many thousands or tens of thousands of dependents and so very few equals or superiors, that it is little to be wondered at if his District forms his world—a good-sized world, it is true—but still his world. And small wonder would it have been, if John Lawrence, responsible as he was for the safety of so vast, so warlike, and so inflammable a province as the Punjab, had thought that he would be doing his duty right well if he held it firmly in his grip, kept within bounds the 36,000 mutinous Sepoys it contained, and opposing an impregnable barrier to the further spread of revolt from the side of Delhi, or to invasion from the side of Afghanistan, preserved a foothold in his own part of India for English rule, till reinforcements were sent out from England to recover the capital of the Moguls.

But Sir John Lawrence, though he had been brought up among Indian officials, and was one of the best and ablest of them himself, had not got a merely official mind. His spirit was imperial, not provincial. He was able to look beyond the Punjab, to the vast empire of which it formed the youngest part, and instead of sacrificing India to save his province, he would have been prepared, under certain circumstances, as we shall see hereafter, to sacrifice his province in whole or in part, if haply he might save the empire. So, while he sent off by letter and by telegram his warm approval of the proposals made by the knot of good men and true at Peshawur, to ensure the safety of the Punjab, and was elaborating and suggesting many others of his own, he never, for an instant, lost sight of the greater object which lay beyond, and which was, henceforward, for four long months, to fill so much of his mental horizon.

A selection from the stirring telegrams and letters which he wrote on the first of these hundred and twenty days must, perforce, be made; and those to the Commander-in-Chief and Governor-General will, perhaps, best show how he had already girded himself for the struggle; how, seeing where the real point of danger lay, he was already able to predict what course—if there were any delay or vacillation on the part of the authorities—the Mutiny would surely take; and how, in furtherance of his object, he was prepared to brush out of his way all the cobwebs of officialism, of etiquette, and of routine. It will be remembered that, as Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, he had no

technical or legal right to make any suggestions at all to the Commander-in-Chief. The Commander-in-Chief was subject indeed to the civil power, but not to the power of the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab; and had General Anson not been able to see that this was no time to stand on ceremony, he might well have been disposed to tell 'the cobbler not to go beyond his last.' It was almost as creditable to the favourite of the Horse Guards, that he was able to recognise the stern integrity of purpose and the statesmanlike insight which underlay the vehement expostulations brought to him hour after hour, or post after post, from Sir John Lawrence, as it was to Sir John Lawrence that he was able, with a volcano beneath his feet, to trouble himself about the more momentous possibilities which lay beyond.

Here is his first telegram, which, though it was addressed to Douglas Forsyth, the Deputy Commissioner at Umballa, was intended for immediate transmission to the Commander-in-Chief:—

May 13.

I think that all the European regiments in the hills, and the Ghoorka regiment at Jutogh, should, at once, be brought down to Umballa, and arrangements be made for securing that cantonment. In the meantime, if the Meerut force has not disarmed or destroyed the mutineers at that place, peremptory orders from the Commander-in-Chief should go down to do so. A large portion of the European force from Meerut, with such native troops as can be trusted, should then march on Delhi, and a picked brigade from Umballa also go down, by forced marches, by Kurnal to Delhi, so that our troops can operate simultaneously from both sides of the Jumna. The city of Delhi and the magazine should be recovered at once. Get the Maharaja of Puttiala to send one regiment to Thaneysur, and another to Loodiana.

His first letter to the Commander-in-Chief ran as follows:

Rawul Pindi: May 13, 1857.

My dear Sir,—I enclose a copy of a telegraphic message which I have just sent to Mr. Forsyth, the Deputy Commissioner at Umballa. I presume that the European force at Meerut has, by this time, acted against its own mutineers, but if it has not done so, peremptory orders should, I think, be sent down by express to this effect. There are probably 1,800 Europeans of the different arms, who should be able to do this at once.

The next step will be to recover Delhi and its magazine; the latter is the arsenal for all Upper India. A picked force moving from Meerut and Umballa, and operating simultaneously from both sides of the Jumna, if

they acted vigorously, could not fail to recover Delhi. Unless this be done, the insurrection will, assuredly, spread, and our European troops become isolated, and, perhaps, be gradually destroyed in detail.

I calculate that the European regiments of infantry and cavalry, after settling affairs at Umballa, and collecting everything worth caring for, might safely march two-thirds of their numbers towards Delhi. This place is ten moderate marches distant; the troops could do it in six or seven. By decisive measures at once we should crush the mutineers, and give support to the well-affected or timid. Time, in such matters, seems to be everything.

For the country this side the Sutlej, up to the Khyber, I make the following proposal. Collect at this place, and subsequently march on to Jhelum, the following Movable Column: two European regiments of infantry, viz. H.M.'s 27th from Nousherah, and six picked companies of the 24th from this place. Add to these the Irregular Cavalry from Shumshabad, and two Punjab corps of Infantry; this force to be commanded by a selected officer, say Brigadier Sydney Cotton, to move on any point and crush rebellion and mutiny. The frontier will be quite safe. Sealkote, Lahore, Ferozepore and Jullundur can hold their own. The places where danger is to be apprehended are where there is no European force, such as Jhelum, Hoshiarpore, Mooltan, and Phillour. The Movable Column, by its very name, would do much good, and, by rapidly advancing on any point where danger was to be apprehended, would crush mutiny and rebellion.

Everything now depends on energy and resolution. A week or two hence it may be too late. If your Excellency will sanction these arrangements, Brigadier Sydney Cotton and I will arrange all the details. I will send him a copy of this letter, and request he will have H.M.'s 27th Regiment ready to move at an hour's notice. Peshawur, with two European regiments, will be quite safe; and as it is the native Regular army we have to guard against, I consider that that portion of it which is on the frontier, from its isolation and position in a strange country, is less dangerous than elsewhere. The people of the country will, I have no doubt, remain quiet so long as the native army keep quiet, and even afterwards, if we act vigorously and decisively. No delay on account of the season of the year, or for any other reason, should be allowed to weigh with us.

I make no apology for writing to your Excellency plainly and fully. I consider this to be the greatest crisis which has ever occurred in India. Our European force is so small that, unless effectively handled in the outset, and brought to bear, it will prove unequal to the emergency. But with vigour and promptitude, under the blessing of God, it will be irresistible.

Yours very faithfully,

JOHN LAWRENCE.

H.E. General the Hon. George Anson.

P.S.—Should you not consider that Brigadier S. Cotton can be spared, any able officer you like might command the Movable Force. I would name Brigadier Chamberlain, but his army rank is a difficulty.

The telegram sent off on the same day to Edmonstone for Lord Canning, is as characteristic as that to Forsyth for General Anson :—

All safe as yet in the Punjab, but the aspect of affairs most threatening. The whole native Regular army are ready to break out, and unless a blow be soon struck, the Irregulars, as a body, will follow their example.

Send for our troops from Persia. Intercept the force now on its way to China, and bring it to Calcutta. Every European soldier will be required to save the country if the whole of the native troops turn against us. This is the opinion of all leading minds here. Every precaution which foresight can dictate is being taken to hold our own, independent of the natives.

Sir John Lawrence enclosed a copy of his letter to General Anson in one of his own to the Governor-General, and from this last I give the following extract :—

Rawul Pindi : May 15, 1857.

My Lord,— . . . We have mutiny at Meerut, mutiny and massacre at Delhi, and all but mutiny at Umballa. What the cause of all this is, it is difficult to divine. I hear that the cartridge question was the commencement of the feeling, and that now the Sepoys think the Government mean to deprive them of their bread, or, in other words, to get rid of them. I am told that the circulation of the chupatty some months ago was connected with this feeling. The 'chupatty' was the symbol of their food, and its circulation was to say that they should hold together or they would lose it all. Be this as it may—that the worst feeling prevails generally in the native army can admit of no doubt. Our European force in India is so small, that it may gradually be worn down and destroyed. It is of the highest importance, therefore, that we should increase our Irregular troops as soon as possible. By my plan, without unduly adding to the number of native troops, we shall be strengthening ourselves in this class of soldiers, while the promotion it will give will prove highly popular. These extra companies can hereafter form the nucleus of new regiments.

I myself am inclined to think that the Native Artillery and Irregular Cavalry will prove faithful as a body. They do not come from Oude and its vicinity, are mostly Mohammedan, and have few sympathies with the Regulars. But, in the event of an emergency, I should like to have

power to raise as far as one thousand horse. I will not do this, of course, unless absolutely necessary.

The proposal for increasing the number of Irregular troops, to which Sir John Lawrence here alludes, had already been made by telegraph. It was to the effect that three companies of fifty men each should be added to each Punjab regiment, to each Sikh corps, and to each police battalion—the whole addition amounting to 4,320 men. By this bold and vigorous action at the very beginning of the revolt, he showed that he already realised the extent to which it was likely to spread, and that he had already made up his mind to trust his subjects and to arm them, under proper conditions, against the Sepoys. On the same day, he recommended that all leave be stopped, and that all officers in Cashmere should be recalled. He ordered all Sepoys' letters passing through the post to be opened, and, if their contents were suspicious, detained. He ordered local levies to be everywhere raised, which were to take charge of out-stations and relieve the suspected Native Infantry guards. He begged Brigadier Campbell at Rawul Pindi to attempt, by full explanations on the subject of the cartridges, to disabuse the minds of his men of the fancies which had gathered round them. He suggested to Edwardes, to Cotton, and to Chamberlain, the component parts of the Movable Column and its early movements. In particular, he ordered the Guides to come from Hoti Murdan to Noushera, and be ready to start for Rawul Pindi at an hour's notice. 'It is want of action,' he wrote to Edwardes, 'rather than the want of means, which may prove disastrous to us;' and already, by this first day's work, he had given pretty good reason to think that, so far as the Punjab and its officers were concerned, neither the one nor the other would be wanting.

Edwardes and Nicholson were, each of them, anxious to have the command of the Mooltani Horse or to accompany the Movable Column, the formation of which they had been the first to suggest. But this proposal the Chief Commissioner thought proper to decline.

I am much obliged to you and Nicholson for the offer of your services, and there are no two men whose services would be more valuable. But I do not think that you could possibly be better placed than where you now are, particularly if Sydney Cotton is moved. The general will require all your help.

There was true wisdom in this. The hour might come, if the

Mutiny ran its course, when Nicholson would be even more useful in the interior of the Punjab or at Delhi than at Peshawur. But so long as there were in the Peshawur valley some 6,000 mutinously disposed native troops with arms in their hands, and with less than 3,000 Europeans to watch and to overawe them; so long as the Mohmunds, the Afridis, the Eusofzyes and a dozen other semi-hostile bordering tribes had not declared themselves; and so long, again, as behind them, although happily beyond their mountains, lay the old Afghan Ameer, whom, for purposes of our own, we had deprived temporarily of his crown, and permanently of his pet province, and whom we had only half conciliated by our two recent treaties, John Lawrence felt that Peshawur was the post of danger, and that, at the post of danger, there was need of the services of the man whose presence on the frontier, in view of his resolute will and his commanding character, he had long since declared to be worth the wing of a regiment.

And there was greater wisdom still in the answer which Sir John Lawrence gave a few days later to the new shape which the proposal of the Peshawur authorities took, that Nicholson, if he was not to be in command of the Mooltani Horse, or to have any other important military post, might, at any rate, accompany the Column, as its chief political officer. John Lawrence saw instinctively, that such an arrangement would be unfair to his subordinates, whom he had selected with so much care, and had then placed in the spots best suited to them. It would be undesirable to supersede their local experience and to lessen their sense of responsibility by attaching any such political officer to the Column. It was the right, as it was the duty and the pride, of each Punjab officer to be responsible for his own District. More than this he would not ask. With less he could not be content.

Another proposal made by the Council at Peshawur that General Reed, who was the senior military officer in the Punjab, should move down to Rawul Pindi, was warmly approved by Sir John Lawrence. The chief civil and military authorities in the province would thus be found in the same place, and, as those who made the proposal foresaw, pretty much in the same hands. General Reed was not a man marked out by nature to take the lead in troublous times, nor was he a man to stand unnecessarily upon his dignity. On the contrary, he was wise enough and patriotic enough to allow himself to be guided by the clearer head and stronger will with which, for the time being,

he was brought into contact. He went down on the 16th to Rawul Pindi with Chamberlain, and, on the evening of the same day, Edwardes was summoned by the Chief Commissioner to join the party. And so, during the next few days, there might have been seen sitting, in one of the three rooms on the ground floor of John Lawrence's small house in the cantonments, a Council of War, composed of Reed, Edwardes, and Chamberlain, while, in the adjoining room, sat and worked, as few men have ever worked, the Chief Commissioner, with James his 'acting' private secretary. It was from this last room that the spirit-stirring telegrams or letters, which lie before me in such rich abundance, passed forth, daily or hourly, to Nicholson and Cotton at Peshawur, to Montgomery and Macpherson at Lahore, to General Anson at Umballa, to Bartle Frere in Scinde, to Lord Elphinstone at Bombay, to Lord Canning at Calcutta, and to Mangles, the Chairman of the Court of Directors, at home.

I quote by preference here one of the last. For it is characteristic of John Lawrence's intellect and of his grasp of the situation, that he was able to write to the then unknown Chairman of the Directors, pointing out, not so much the danger to his own province, as to the empire at large, putting his finger on the chief blots of our military system; and even now, in 'the greatest crisis,' as he calls it, which had ever occurred in India, suggesting the remedy :—

Rawul Pindi : May 15, 1857.

My dear Sir,—I make no apology for writing to you at such a crisis. I enclose a copy of a note I have addressed to Lord Elphinstone. So far as we can yet learn, the Irregular troops will prove faithful; but the disaffection in the native Regular Army seems general, and, I may add, universal. By God's help, we are strong enough in the Punjab to hold our own. But the state of Bengal and the Upper Provinces seems most critical. Between Calcutta and Agra there cannot be more than five or six thousand European soldiers, and these are scattered about the country. Even at Meerut, where there are some eighteen hundred European soldiers of all arms, we hear that they have not acted on the offensive, but apprehend attack.

The present *émeutes* have been excited, apparently, by the new cartridges. The Sepoys have got an idea into their heads that the paper is dipped in cow fat, and there is no getting it out of them. They seem to have made up their minds that their religion is in danger. It is vain to talk and to reason with them. Corps which have not committed themselves protest that they are loyal, until the moment when they break out.

Officers seem to think that some other cause must exist, but this I doubt. Men who are ignorant and prejudiced, when once they have taken up an idea, do not easily give it up. However, it is very probable that cunning and designing men have fanned the flame. The *émeute* among the 3rd Cavalry, who are nearly all Mohammedans, is most unaccountable, and I should suppose that some mismanagement has given rise to an ill-feeling amongst them—which not being promptly allayed, the men have gone with the Regular Native Infantry.

What makes the state of affairs so serious is that nearly all the latter class come from Oude and its vicinity, and the majority are Brahmins. Thus they have the same prejudices and feelings, and can combine with a perfect confidence in one another. The European officers of the native Regulars do not mix sufficiently with their men, are unable to fathom their real sentiments, and do not sympathise sufficiently with them in every-day life.

The Irregulars have no common feeling with the Regulars, and being composed of mixed races, and commanded by officers whose qualities have been called forth by their position, are much more reliable. Still they are mercenaries, and bad example is catching.

This seems to me the greatest crisis which has as yet occurred in India; and it will require great good management to weather the storm. I most strongly urge that a large body of European infantry be despatched to India as soon as may be possible. After what has occurred, it would be the extreme of fatuity not to strengthen ourselves in this way. Something of this kind seemed necessary to show the unsoundness of the present military system. Nothing short of it would, I believe, convince some people, or counteract the influence of class interests. From a false *esprit de corps* officers will not, in ordinary times, admit that anything is wrong. The whole Regular native army should be reorganised and remodelled. Native troops should have few officers. But these should be well selected, and readily removable, if they prove a failure. Many officers with native troops do harm, for they have nothing to do, try to get away, and, failing to do so, become discontented. All the native army should be on the Irregular system, and the saving which would be effected would cover all the expense of a sufficient addition to the European force.

But, amidst all his pressing anxieties, the Chief Commissioner's sense of humour never deserted him, nor was the conversation confined, even in these first days, to the Mutiny alone. One who was present still remembers the animation with which, in the verandah outside his house, in the cool of the evening, so remote a subject as Ruskin's marriage was discussed, Edwardes, the most literary of the party, naturally taking the lead in the conversation; while another

recollects how the Chief Commissioner himself, in one of his early morning rides on a breezy day, meeting a native who was employed in the Telegraph Department, asked him, with a serious face, what was the cause of the noise he heard in the wires? The man replied that he did not know. 'What!' said the Chief Commissioner, 'you in the Department and not know as much as that?' The man, little thinking that the Sahib was having a joke at his expense, and, perhaps, imagining that the sound might have more to do with the Mutiny than he was likely at that early stage to know, replied: 'Please, my lord, I have only been a short time in the office; but I shall soon know all about it.' So again, when Barnes, Commissioner of the Cis-Sutlej States, who had been doing excellent work in bringing the great protected chiefs of his division to stand by us in our hour of need, telegraphed—as it would seem now, under a misconception—to the Chief Commissioner, that Anson was talking of entrenching himself at Umballa instead of marching on Delhi, the answer flashed back, bythe leave or the suggestion of the Chief Commissioner, is said to have been, 'Clubs, not spades, are trumps; when in doubt, take the trick.' It was an answer which the Commander-in-Chief, who had published a standard work on whist, would quite appreciate, and it would help, moreover, to carry off those more serious and drastic messages, in which John Lawrence, clinging to his great purpose, kept urging, at all hazards, an immediate advance on Delhi.

And what was happening at Head-quarters meanwhile? The news had reached Umballa on the 11th, and a son of General Barnard had been despatched with it post-haste to Simla. He reached his destination on the 12th, and had the Commander-in-Chief been able to realise its vast importance, that night, we may feel sure, would have seen him far down the road to Umballa in front of his troops; and, once there, he would have been straining every nerve in that great city, the military and civil centre of the District, for an immediate advance towards Delhi. As it was, he arrived only on the morning of the 15th, and then, if not before, he must have received the stirring letter from the Chief Commissioner which I have already quoted. A second followed hard upon it, urging him to make one more effort to recall the Sepoys to their duty by the issue of a new order, abolishing not only *the* new cartridges, but all new cartridges altogether.

It is perfectly useless our saying that the Sepoys should trust in our

word that nothing objectionable is used in making up these cartridges. They will not believe it. They feel that their religion is in danger, and are ready to resist and even break out. The very precautions which are taken by us to guard against the danger add to their alarm. . . . There seems to be nothing for it but to give way in this matter, for the present at any rate, to be warned by what has occurred, to take measures to add to our European force in India, and to re-organise our native system.

I consider it my duty to write to your Excellency without reserve. The communications with Calcutta are said to be cut off, and, at any rate, time does not admit of a reference to the Governor-General. Our policy is to act at once, to recall the disloyal to a sense of duty, to assure the wavering, and to strike with effect against those in revolt.

The suggestion as regards the cartridges was at once complied with. But it was too late. It is difficult to say what might not have been the result of such a proclamation, had it been issued by General Anson when he was on his way to Simla in April, amidst unmistakeable signs of rising mutiny, but before a drop of blood had been shed.

Three days later, foreseeing the objections to a 'forward policy,' which, according to approved precedents, would be urged upon the Commander-in-Chief by his advisers at Umballa, John Lawrence wrote again, hoping to minimise their effect, and he was able to make his advice more palatable, by the good news that the Guides were already on their march for Delhi, and that the Movable Column for the Punjab was not merely forming, but was already, in a great measure, formed :—

Rawul Pindi: May 19, 1857.

My dear Sir,—The *Guides* go from this to-morrow, and expect to be at Lahore on the 25th, and will march thence *viâ* Ferozepore to Kurnal. The Movable Column will be at Wuzeerabad on the 25th, and be there joined by H.M.'s 52nd, the Artillery, and one N. I., all from Sealkote.

I do sincerely hope that you will be able to disengage the Meerut force by an early date, so as to enable it to act. Entrenched at Meerut, it may be safe for a time, but can do no good, and the people of the country will become demoralised, and, eventually, food will fail. Free the Meerut force, which has allowed itself to be paralysed, scour the country, disarm the native troops who have mutinied, or who are known to be faithless; and then act according to circumstances. If Agra and the North-West are in danger, I would say move down from place to place, uniting with the European troops, and destroying the enemy. We

shall be all safe this side of the Sutlej, and be able to help you with native troops, like the Guides and others.

If you leave one native Regular corps at Umballa, with a proper proportion of Europeans, and all your ladies, European women and treasure collected together, and take on the other native corps, all will go well. *What we should avoid is isolation, and the commanders of stations each looking to his own charge, and not to the general weal.* Many will, I fear, counsel delay and caution, but such a policy must prove ruinous. In marching the Europeans, I would take as many elephants and other animals as possible, to carry the weary and footsore. Between Meerut and Calcutta we have but five regiments of Europeans, scattered over the country at wide intervals. What is to become of them, and all our countrymen, if we only hold our own at points where we are strong?

One observation can hardly fail to suggest itself here. Though it was on Delhi that John Lawrence's eyes and hopes were fixed, he was far from denying that other places might call, even more imperatively, for the presence of our troops. On two points only he insisted: one was the necessity for action—for action, that is, of some kind or other. Do something to show that you are not afraid; take the initiative; waverers will infallibly join those who show the boldest front; inaction at Meerut has lost us Delhi; inaction at Umballa may lose us India. Such was the gist of all his exhortations. Second, and only less important: take a wide view; do not act as they have done and are still doing at Meerut; think not merely of the safety of your own cantonment, your own fort, your own force, or even your own province, but think of India as a whole. What wiser or more opportune advice could have been given? If John Lawrence, as a civilian, had a necessarily imperfect appreciation of the purely military conditions of the problem, he had, what was much more important, a complete grasp of its moral and political conditions. He knew the people of India thoroughly, and, knowing them, he had a right to point out what dangers must be dared, and what rules of warfare disregarded.

General Anson, if he found at Umballa much to perplex, found also not a little to aid and to encourage him. The Cis-Sutlej Division, the most difficult and complicated in the Punjab, was in excellent hands, and so also were nearly all its districts. Barnes, the Commissioner, Douglas Forsyth, the Deputy Commissioner of Umballa, MacAndrew, one of the Assistant Commissioners, and George Ricketts, the Deputy Commissioner of Loodiana, had been doing all

that men could do to meet the crisis. Already, Forsyth, anticipating the telegram of the Chief Commissioner, which I have quoted, had summoned the 'protected' Maharaja of Puttiala, whose dominions were almost surrounded by our own, to do his part towards securing the safety of his protectors. Already, the Maharaja had responded to the appeal, had come down to an interview, had placed his whole force at our disposal, and had sent forward a detachment to Thanesur, to guard the Grand Trunk Road, the main artery of communication between the Punjab and Delhi. Already, the Raja of Jheend, another of those great 'protected' chiefs, without even waiting to be summoned, had concentrated his troops, and was nearing the cantonment of Kurnal, a point still further down the road, and was thus acting, at the same time, as the vanguard of the English army and as a breakwater against the mutineers, if, in the enthusiasm of their first success, they might be disposed to advance against us from Delhi. Already, the Raja of Nabha, the third of our protected or protecting chieftains, was on his way to Loodiana, the other point of danger specified by John Lawrence in his telegram of May 13. The civil treasury and civil lines at Umballa had already been transferred to the guardianship of the trusted Sikh police. The ferries of the river had been placed under strict watch and ward, and the numerous smaller Sikh chieftains whom we had confirmed in their jagheers, on condition of an annual payment, had been called upon by Barnes to furnish a contingent of men instead—and had, already, complied with the demand.

All this looked well enough. But there were also grave obstacles to an advance, for which the Commander-in-Chief was only partially responsible. He had left behind him something like mutiny even among the faithful Ghoorkas at Jutogh, and something still more like panic, and panic of the most disgraceful kind, among the European inhabitants of Simla. The European regiments, which had come down promptly enough from the hills to Umballa, found there what is the usual, it may almost be said the invariable, state of things when an English force is called upon to act in an emergency. Nothing was ready. There was a lack of tents, of medical appliances, of carriage, of baggage animals. There were no heavy guns, no reserve artillery ammunition. Even the supply of small ammunition had run short. The siege-train was at Phillour, some eighty miles off, and there was no escort available to bring it up. Cholera had begun to show itself in the overcrowded barracks, and, worse than

all, the mutinous spirit which the Commander-in-Chief had coquetted with and had left behind him, as though it were of no account, in the Umballa cantonment, when he passed on to the hills at Simla in April, had been smouldering on ever since, and had burst into a momentary flame on the day of the outbreak at Meerut. On that occasion, the mutineers had been coaxed rather than coerced into submission, and Anson now saw clearly enough that he could not afford either to take such men with him to Delhi, or to leave them behind him, with arms in their hands, at Umballa. Why not then follow the example of Lahore, and, utilising the large European force at his disposal, render the disaffected Sepoys at least innocuous by disarming them at once?

In vain, did General Anson himself receive evidence of their mutinous spirit when he ordered them 'to advance by wings,' and they declined to do so. In vain, did Sir John Lawrence urge upon him by letters and by reiterated telegrams the step which instincts of self-preservation seemed to demand. The officers of the mutinous regiments still protested their belief in the men. Anson yielded his better judgment to them, and met the appeals of the Chief Commissioner by that *non possumus* which, with those who once allow themselves to plead it, is so omnipotent. The arms which he allowed the mutineers to retain were, of course, soon used against us, and what might have been done, thoroughly and at once, without firing a shot, was only half-done, later on, with much expenditure of time and trouble and life.

But we must take care not to blame Anson unjustly, and he and the Chief Commissioner shall, henceforward, speak on this and other subjects for themselves. Two days after his arrival at Umballa, on May 17, Anson replied to the Chief Commissioner as follows :—

My dear Sir John,—I have received your letter dated the 13th, the main purport of which was to urge the immediate recovery of Delhi. Things are, however, altered since that date. The whole of the army (native) may be said to be in a state of mutiny. None are to be depended upon. There were two great objects, besides the prestige of success which you contemplated—the saving of the lives of the European community and the recovery of the magazine. The former, it is ascertained, have been mostly sacrificed; the latter was blown up.

But it was, and is, impossible to move for want of tents, &c. The second European regiment only arrived this morning—and all of them having been brought in such a hurry, and so quickly, they have nothing with them. We hear that many regiments have joined the mutineers in

Delhi, the gates of which are closed, and guns mounted on them. The walls would be nothing against guns of heavy calibre. But we have none nearer than Phillour, and only two troops with six-pounders. At Meerut there is a light field battery of nine-pounders. My intelligence from Meerut is very scanty. I instructed General Hewitt to be prepared to join me with all the force he could spare, after providing for the protection of the cantonments. I have not heard from him what this would be.

We cannot count upon our two Native Infantry regiments and one of cavalry. They have not committed themselves, and the Major-General and their commanding officers represented their conduct as so good, that I gave them to understand they should be trusted, and would march wherever the force marched. They objected, I was told, to be divided into wings, and said they would be true if allowed to go with their colours. There is, however, no faith to be placed in any, and I should be heartily glad to be rid of them. The refusal of the Nusseree battery to come into the plains is a most serious misfortune. I am glad to say they have not been violent, but I am told they were apparently determined to have their own way, and I have been obliged to send one hundred men of the 75th back to Kussowlie, to afford protection to that place and Simla. We have therefore enemies in our rear, and it is difficult to say from what quarter they may not come. . . .

It becomes now a matter for your consideration, whether it would be prudent to risk the small European force we have here in an enterprise upon Delhi. I think not. It is wholly, in my opinion, insufficient for the purpose. The walls could, of course, be battered down with heavy guns, when we got them up. The entrance might be opened, and little resistance offered, but so few men in a large city with such narrow streets, and an immense armed population who know every turn and corner of them, would, it appears to me, be in a very dangerous position. And if six or seven hundred were disabled, what would remain? Could we hold it with the whole country armed against us? Could we either stay in or out of it? My own view of the state of things now is, by carefully collecting our resources, having got rid of the bad materials which we cannot trust, and having supplied their places with others of a better sort, it would not be very long before we could proceed, without a chance of failure, in whatever direction we might please.

Your telegraphic message, informing me of the measures you have taken to raise fresh troops, confirms me in this opinion. I must add also that this is now the opinion of all here whom I have consulted upon it, the Major-General and Brigadier, the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General and Commissary-General. The latter has, however, offered a positive impediment to it in the impossibility of providing what would be necessary for such an advance under from sixteen to

twenty days. I thought it could have been done in less, but that was before I had seen Colonel Thomson. Indeed, it is very little more than forty-eight hours since I came here, and every hour produces something which may alter a previous opinion. . . . It would give me great satisfaction to have your views upon the present crisis, for I would trust to them more than to my experience.

Yours very truly,
GEORGE ANSON.

It was not long before the Chief Commissioner gave again his views upon the crisis, and it is hardly necessary to say that they did not agree with those of the Commander-in-Chief. I cannot afford to omit a single word of his letter : —

Rawul Pindi : May 21, 1857.

My dear Sir,—I telegraphed, last night, my reply to yours of the 17th. I do not myself think that the country is anywhere against us, certainly not from here to within a few miles of Delhi. I served, for nearly thirteen years, in Delhi, and know the people well. My belief is that, with good management on the part of the civil officers, it would open its gates on the approach of our troops. It seems incredible to conceive that the mutineers can hold and defend it. Still I admit that, on military principles, in the present state of affairs, it may not be expedient to advance on Delhi ; certainly not until the Meerut force is prepared to act, which it can only be when set free. Once relieve Meerut, and give confidence to the country, no difficulty regarding carriage can occur. By good arrangements the owners will come forward. But in any case it can be collected.

From Meerut you will be able to form a sound judgment on the course to be followed. If the country lower down be disturbed, and the Sepoys have mutinied, I conceive it would be a paramount duty to march that way, relieve each place, and disarm or destroy the mutineers. If, on the other hand, all were safe, it would be a question whether you would consolidate your resources there, or march on Delhi.

I think it must be allowed that our European troops are not placed at this or that station, simply to hold it, but to be ready to move wherever they may be required. Salubrious and centrical points for their location were selected, but so long as we maintain our prestige, and keep the country quiet, it cannot signify how many cantonments we abandon. But this we cannot do if we allow two or three native corps to checkmate large bodies of Europeans. It will then be a mere question of time ; by slow degrees, but of a certainty, the native troops *must* destroy us.

We are doing all we can to strengthen ourselves, and to reinforce you either by direct or indirect means. But can your Excellency suppose, for one moment, that the Irregular troops will remain staunch, if they see

our European soldiers cooped up in their cantonments, tamely awaiting the progress of events?

Your Excellency remarks that we must 'carefully collect our resources.' But what are these resources, but our European soldiers, our guns and our material? These are all ready at hand, and only require to be handled wisely and vigorously to produce great results. We have money also, and the control of the country. But if disaffection spread, insurrection will follow, and we shall then neither be able to collect the revenue nor procure supplies.

Pray only reflect on the whole history of India. Where have we failed when we acted vigorously? Where have we succeeded when guided by timid counsels? Clive with twelve hundred men fought at Plassey, in opposition to the advice of his leading officers, beat forty thousand men, and conquered Bengal. Monson retreated from the Chumbul, and before he gained Agra his army was disorganised, and partially annihilated. Look at the Cabul catastrophe. It might have been averted by resolute and bold action. The Irregulars of the army, the Kuzzulbushes —in short, our friends, of whom we had many—only left us when they found we were not true to ourselves. How can it be supposed that strangers and mercenaries will sacrifice everything for us? There is a point up to which they will stand by us; for they know that we have always been eventually successful, and that we are good masters. But, go beyond this point, and every man will look to his immediate benefit, his present safety.

The Punjab Irregulars are marching down in the highest spirits, proud to be trusted, and, eager to show their superiority over the Regular troops, ready to fight shoulder to shoulder with the Europeans. But if, on their arrival, they find the Europeans behind breast-works, they will begin to think that the game is up. Recollect that all this time, while we are pausing, the emissaries of the mutineers are writing to and visiting every cantonment.

It seems to me lamentable to think that in no case have the mutineers yet suffered. Brigadier Corbett has indeed managed admirably. With six weak companies and his artillery, he disarmed three regiments, and thus rendered them harmless. Brigadier Innes seems to me to have missed an excellent opportunity of teaching the Sepoys a lesson, which would have cowed them for hundreds of miles round. Her Majesty's 61st Regiment repulsed, without an effort, the attacks of the 45th, but the Sepoys got off with little loss. And even then, they had not the heart to keep together, but seem to have thrown away their arms and dispersed. At Delhi, the Sepoys have murdered their officers, and taken our guns, but, even there, they did not stand. No number of them can face a moderate body of Europeans, fairly handled. Of late years, even when fighting under our own banners, in a good cause, with European

officers at their head and English comrades at their side, they have seldom done anything. As mutineers, they cannot fight. They will burn, destroy, and massacre, but not fight.

I should suppose that any pledges which were given to the Umballa Sepoys were forfeited when they refused to obey orders, to march by wings; and, in this view of the matter, I would disband them after taking away their arms. The horses of the cavalry would enable our Europeans to move forward without distress. But if you still consider that faith must be kept with men who have kept, and will keep, no faith with us, then, by all means, take one regiment with you, making such arrangements as will prevent their suddenly turning round and dealing a deadly blow against our Europeans.

I cannot comprehend what the Commissariat can mean by requiring from sixteen to twenty days to procure provisions! I am persuaded that all you can require to take with you must be procurable in two or three. We have had an extraordinarily good harvest, and supplies must be abundant between Umballa and Meerut. The greater portion of the country is well cultivated. We are sending our troops in every direction without difficulty, through tracts which are comparatively desert.

Our true policy is to trust the Maharaja of Puttiala, and Raja of Jheend, and the country generally—for they have shown evidence of being on our side—but utterly to distrust the Regular Sepoys. I would spare no expense to carry every European soldier; at any rate, to carry every other one. By alternately marching and riding their strength and spirits will be maintained. We are pushing on the Guides, the 4th Sikhs, and 1st and 4th Punjab regiments of Infantry from distant parts of the Punjab in this way.

If there is any officer in the Punjab whom your Excellency would wish to have at your side, pray don't hesitate to apply for him. There is a young officer now at Head-quarters, who, though young in years, has seen much service, and proved himself an excellent soldier. I allude to Captain Norman, of the Adjutant-General's office. Sir Colin Campbell had the highest opinion of his judgment, and when he left Peshawur, it was considered a public loss.

There is, in my judgment, no single letter in the whole of Sir John Lawrence's correspondence during the Mutiny which brings one side of his character more vigorously before us. It is impossible, as we read, not to see the man as he wrote it, not to feel something of that *vis viva* which communicated itself to everyone within the sphere of his influence.

What was thought of Sir John Lawrence's letters and telegrams, at the time, by those who best knew what need there was for them, I

find strikingly illustrated in a book called 'Service and Adventures with the Meerut Volunteer Horse during the Mutinies.'

Mrs. P—— and her husband (says the writer, R. Dunlop, who had never been a subordinate of John Lawrence) had been exceptions to the sadly general exhibition of fright during the Simla panic. Her husband had gone down to take his place where manhood should; and she spoke confidently and cheerfully, as a brave-hearted Englishwoman ought, of the tremendous task which was still before us. She too spoke, as all were speaking, of Lawrence: Lawrence, who not only got through Herculean labours himself, but sternly forced all malingerers to do their duty; who, with the authority of a master-mind, flashed message after message of abrupt command wherever the electric shock was necessary. One of the earliest victims of the struggle had sunk, she said, killed by an attack of Lawrence's telegraphic messages!

In a letter which reached Rawul Pindi the day after the above letter was written, but was not, of course, an answer to it, the Commander-in-Chief dwelt on his difficulties and denied that there had been any undue delay. 'Nobody could wish more than myself that we could have got away sooner. There were no tents, no ammunition, not twenty rounds per man in the pouches of the Europeans.' The troops could not, he said, have moved forward without carriage. The camels and the bullock train which had brought them down from the hills had been obliged to return to fetch the tents, and, even so, an advance party had been sent on to Kurnal on the evening of the 17th. He thought, therefore, that the remark which he had seen in a telegram of James to Barnes to the effect that 'the delay of the Commander-in-Chief was fatal' was not justifiable.

John Lawrence replied, expressing his regret if any of his remarks had given pain, explaining his general views, and making suggestions which, from his intimate knowledge of Delhi, he thought might be useful.

Rawul Pindi: May 23, 1857.

My dear General Anson,—I enclose copy of Captain James's telegraphic message to which you allude in your letter of the 19th. From it you will perceive that it does not bear the objectionable interpretation which you suppose. I should greatly regret if any message or letter of mine should annoy you. I have written warmly and strongly in favour of an advance, because I felt assured that such was the true policy. However much we may be taken by surprise, our military organisation admits of prompt action. The country is almost sure to be with us, if it

were only that we save them from trouble. And this will more especially be the case in an affair like the present, when we have really to contend only with our own troops, with whom the people can have no sympathy.

If there be any place where the population will rise against us, it is in the Peshawur valley, where the people are naturally turbulent and highly bigoted and fanatical, and where the chiefs are hostile to us. Yet, so far, we have found them well-disposed. While the chiefs keep aloof, the heads of villages are coming and bringing their quotas of men. . . . I cannot comprehend why Colonel Thompson requires so much supplies. To carry so much food with the troops is to encumber the Column and waste our money. To guard against accidents, three or four days' supplies should be taken, but no more. My belief is that ten thousand troops might march all over the North-West, and, provided they paid for what they required, no difficulty in obtaining supplies would be experienced.

I still think that no real resistance at Delhi will be attempted. But, of course, we must first get the Meerut force into order, and, in moving against Delhi, go prepared to fight. My impression is that, on the approach of our troops, the mutineers will either disperse, or the people of the city rise and open their gates. An officer of intelligence with a few Irregulars might move from Meerut to Shahdaruh, on the left bank of the Jumna, about three miles from Delhi. There he would be perfectly safe, and could open a communication with the loyal inhabitants. He should be, if possible, well acquainted with the country about Delhi, and have some money with him. He would then get hundreds to go and bring him all the information he could desire. There is no difficulty in passing across the river at many points. There are many ferries, both above and below the city. I have myself crossed it at midnight on horseback with a party of sowars. But, even in flood, the people cross by holding on at the tail of a buffalo, and will, in this way, pass unsuspected and bring information. I think also that a couple of hundred sowars might push on to within a mile or so of Delhi along the high road *viâ* Kurnal, Paniput, and Soniput. Our troops are moving down as fast as possible; but it must be some time before they can be brought to bear in your quarter. . . .

P.S.—I strongly recommend that no permanent arrangement be made to supply the place of the Regular native troops who have committed themselves. Now, if ever, will be the time for a change of system.

It will be seen that what most of all distressed John Lawrence in the position of affairs at Umballa was the delay of *sixteen* days required by Colonel Thompson, the Commissary-General, for the collection of supplies! During that time he believed—as he believed

also when looking calmly back at all the circumstances of the case when the Mutiny was over—that, if we gave no sign of acting on the offensive, the whole population between the Jumna and the Sutlej would rise, and that the chiefs of Puttiala, Jheend and Nabha, who performed such excellent service afterwards, would, even if they stood by us, be deserted by their own troops, or else be compelled by them to join the insurrection. He could not forget how, ten years before, Major Broadfoot, the Governor-General's 'Agent of the frontier,' had managed to raise supplies for the advance of our army at the beginning of the Sikh war from this very place, in the space of a few days only, though the Commissary-General of that time had told Lord Hardinge that a month or six weeks would be necessary! Still less could he forget how, when Lord Hardinge had written to him as Collector of Delhi, after the terrible battle of Ferozeshah, begging him to do his utmost to get carriage for the reinforcements, he had himself, in a very short space of time, collected together four thousand carts and beasts of burden, and, with the good will of the owners, had despatched them to bear their part in the great victory of Sobraon. His urgency, therefore, now was justified by facts. What had been done once might be done again. And happily it was done, in much the same way, by an appeal to the civil authorities, Barnes and Forsyth, who, knowing the country as no one else knew it at that moment, and having powers of command which could hardly belong to the military authorities, managed to gather together, in less than a week, two thousand camels, two thousand bearers, and five hundred carts!

Thus, one great obstacle to the advance had been removed, and in deference to repeated messages from Lord Canning as well as from John Lawrence, General Anson decided to move onward without waiting for the Siege Train. He wrote to General Hewett, making all the arrangements for a junction with the Meerut force at Baghput; he sent on his own force by detachments; and, on the 24th of the month, he himself left Umballa with the remaining portion of the Europeans. It was his first and his last day's march. For, on the following day, he lay death-stricken at Kurnal, the victim of the terrible scourge which had broken out in the crowded barracks at Umballa, and which knew no distinction of rank. Sir Henry Barnard, a Crimean general who had lately come to India, and was in command of the Sirhind Division, was hastily sent for from Umballa, and arrived just in time to take over the command from the dying general and to receive his

last messages. Anson's was indeed an unkind fate. With Lord Canning telegraphing to him from Calcutta and John Lawrence from Rawul Pindi, to strike a deadly blow, while the officers of his staff were telling him with one consent that it was impossible to move at all, he can have had no easy life. And everyone must regret that so brave a soldier, after surmounting some at least of his difficulties, did not live long enough to show the mettle which many believed him to possess, and to die, if not on the field of battle, at least, as did his successor six short weeks later, after measuring his sword victoriously with the enemy within sight of the minarets of Delhi. While his body still lay in the adjoining room, Barnard wrote a generous letter to the Chief Commissioner, who had so chafed at his delay, pointing out how great his difficulties had been and how strenuously he had striven to breast them. And it is not without interest to notice that, on the day of his death, the Chief Commissioner had himself been engaged in writing him a letter which dropped no hint of censure for the past, and enlarged on the reinforcements from the Punjab which he hoped soon to send him.

I have dwelt long and quoted largely from the correspondence of John Lawrence with the Commander-in-Chief during the first fortnight of the Mutiny, because it is impossible to read even this much of it, without gaining a real insight into the character and policy of the writer. It is not so much a question of whether this or that proposal was altogether right or was urged with all the qualifications which military specialists, or those who are wise after the event, may discover. It is rather a question of his grasp of the situation as a whole, of the way in which he at once showed that he was the man to fill the gap that had been made, to fill any gap that might hereafter be made, by the spread of the Mutiny. The outbreak itself shows us that the opportunity has at length come to the man. The measures of the first few days show sufficiently that the man will not be wanting to the opportunity. That he was right in his two main suggestions to General Anson, the immediate disarmament of the Sepoys at Umballa, and the earliest possible advance towards Delhi, alike from Umballa and Meerut, hardly indeed admits of question. What the effect on India would have been had Delhi been left, as it is understood some of the military authorities would have advised that it should, unmolested by us, till reinforcements should arrive from England, may be inferred from the influence that its name and prestige and that of the restored Mogul sovereignty did unquestionably

exercise in every Sepoy cantonment and in every native bazaar from Peshawur to Calcutta, long after we had begun to threaten its existence, and down even to the moment of its fall.

As regards the mutinous Sepoys at Umballa, that Sir John Lawrence and not the military authorities on the spot was right, is shown, beyond all question, by the result. Of three regiments, one of cavalry and two of infantry, which might have been disarmed—as had already been done at Lahore, and was about to be done, without a blow being struck or a drop of blood being spilt, at Peshawur—one, the light cavalry regiment, in order that it might be made as innocuous as possible, was sent off, in detachments, to places where it was not wanted, and from which the men took an early opportunity of deserting. A second, the 5th Native Infantry, was left behind at Umballa with a force to guard it, and being at last detected in a plot to seize the guns of the Siege Train when it arrived from Phillour, the men were disarmed and gradually slunk off to Delhi. The third corps, the 60th, the Commander-in-Chief had proposed to take with him in his advance. But when his small European force demurred, not unreasonably, to facing the enemy with a more than doubtful enemy within their own ranks, he sent them off instead to Rohtuck, where, shortly afterwards, they mutinied, fired on their officers, and went off to Delhi to swell the rebel army.

Sir Henry Barnard was new to the country, and was, therefore, encompassed by special difficulties of his own. But he lost no time in assuring the Chief Commissioner that, having put his hand to the plough, he would not look back. He wrote on the day of his predecessor's death :—

> It is only on this day that I expect the necessary supply of ammunition to arrive at Umballa. I have determined (I say *I*, for poor Anson could only recognise me and hand me over the command when I arrived, here last night) not to wait for the siege train, but, after the exchange from six to nine pounders has been effected to-day, to bring up all the remainder of the force from Umballa, Mr. Barnes undertaking to convoy the train. The 60th Native Infantry I have detached to Hansi to intercept fugitives or repel advance, a threat which does not seem likely to be put into execution, but it employs them honourably and *gets them out of the way*.

And, on the following day, he writes again :—

> I have nothing to say from Meerut. Much has got to be explained. Doubtless it is *fatal* in this country if your European troops are not at

once to the fore for any service. But, as regards Umballa, all has been activity and movement; but all were in a manner paralysed, inasmuch as, instead of devoting every thought and energy to the service, the safety of family and friends came uppermost. I would pity, really, rather than condemn. I have lent every assistance in my power. General Anson placed me in command, and, so long as I exercise any power, you may rest assured every energy shall be devoted to the object I have now in view—namely, concentrating all the force I can collect, securing the bridge at Bhagput, securing communication with Meerut. For this object, all is now in actual motion. . . . General Reed has notified his intention of coming here; but, of course, nothing is to be delayed waiting for his arrival. I shall keep you informed of all by telegraph.

John Lawrence replied to these and other letters from Sir H. Barnard on the 31st :—

My dear Sir Henry,—Many thanks for your different letters. I sincerely hope that nothing I wrote to General Anson disturbed his deathbed. I had no intention to reflect on him; to wound his feelings. What I wished to do was to show him the crisis which had arrived; the gulf which was yawning at his feet. No man would more truly desire to care for the European soldiers than I would, for I know their value. But there are times when it is absolutely necessary to expose them. Up here, we could not foresee that they were so badly supplied with ammunition and the necessaries for a march.

The officers about the Commander-in-Chief could not have reflected—I mean those who were opposed to an advance—that in little more than a month the rains would intervene; and therefore that, if we delayed to recover Delhi, we should have to wait until the cold weather. But I should like to ask such officers where British India would have been by that time but in the hands of our enemies. Our troops—I mean the Europeans—where in any numbers, might have held the ground on which they stood, but no more. As regards the native Regular troops, I believe that all are disaffected and untrustworthy, and that many even of the Irregular Hindustani horse sympathise with them. But amongst the very worst of these troops I should rank those of Umballa. What, I would ask, has been the meaning of all these fires in Umballa for the last three months? Who have been their authors? It is notorious that they have been perpetrated by the native troops.

I look on it that the only safe way to deal with mercenary troops in a state of mutiny, is to overpower or disarm them. If we don't, we are in constant danger of their suddenly turning on us, and inflicting a deadly blow. Moreover, at the best, we must employ a body of good troops to watch them, and so weaken ourselves at a time when every European soldier who is available should be brought to bear against the enemy.

So now, at length, to the intense relief of the Chief Commissioner's mind, General Barnard's force was in full march for Delhi. He reached Alipore, twelve miles from his destination, on June 5. But here he was obliged to halt till he should be joined by the Siege Train from Phillour, and by the force which was moving up from Meerut under Brigadier-General Wilson, on the other side of the Jumna. He had not long to wait for either. For, on the following morning, after a series of adventures which those who were responsible for its safety, and who knew what turned on it, might well regard as miraculous, the Siege Train arrived. By dint of incredible exertions, it had been equipped within seven days of the arrival of the telegram which ordered it. But Phillour was eighty miles from Umballa. There was no dependable escort to be found amongst our own troops, and between the two places rolled the broad and rapid river Sutlej, then rising from hour to hour, and bridged only by a bridge of boats which the torrent might at any moment sweep away. It was a race, in the literal sense of the word, against wind and tide, and the Siege Train won—won by two hours only. For two hours had not passed, after the last gun-carriage had reached the opposite shore, before the whole bridge was swept away.[1]

The Sepoys of the 3rd Regiment at Phillour, who had offered to escort the Train, were known to be mutinous to the core ; and they, too, only just missed their opportunity. In a moment of fatuity, or inadvertence, they allowed the heavy guns to cross the river in front of them, and when the bridge was swept away, they found themselves on the wrong side ! Their further services were dispensed with, for the present, and the ever-ready Raja of Nabha stepped into the gap and supplied an escort. On the 27th, the Train reached Umballa, escaped the machinations of the 5th Native Infantry there, and caught up General Barnard on the 6th of June.

On the 7th, Wilson's small brigade, which in its short march from Meerut had already been twice engaged with the enemy, and had twice sent them flying back to Delhi, arrived, and, on the following day, both forces moved on together, inspired by the success which had already been won, and burning with an inextinguishable desire to revenge the brutal murder of English officers, English women, and English children on every black face that would dare to meet them in the open field.

[1] Cave Brown's *Punjab and Delhi*, vol. i. p. 206.

In the brilliant battle of Budli-ke-Serai, fought in the cool of the early morning, they dislodged the enemy from a strong position which they had themselves selected, five miles from Delhi; and then in a second engagement, fought beneath the full fury of the June sun, swept them from a second position some miles further on, into the city itself. The rout of the enemy was complete. We took thirteen of their guns, and found ourselves once more the undisputed masters of our own cantonments, and of that immortal 'Ridge' from which, for fourteen long weeks to come, exposed to nearly every suffering to which human flesh is heir, we were never to come down except to smite the foe, and never to abandon till the guilty city which it threatened, or, to speak more accurately, which threatened it, was in our hands.

It was a perilous prize of victory, this narrow ridge, and one which not a few of the cooler heads and braver hearts to be found in our force must, as they settled down to the work before them, have felt that, perhaps, they could have done better without. A force consisting of 3,000 men all told, of twenty field guns, and a small Siege Train, were taking up their position at one corner of its vast circumference, to besiege, or at least to menace, a city of 150,000 inhabitants, defended by strong fortifications which we ourselves had constructed and repaired, and which bristled with guns many times more numerous, of far heavier metal, and much better served than any that we could bring against them. Within the city, was an arsenal where arms of every description were to be had for the asking, and the whole was garrisoned by an army of revolted Sepoys who were all the more formidable from the vagueness of the guesses we could form as to their numbers, had all been trained and armed by ourselves, were all spurred on by the fanaticism of an outraged religion or the zeal of a rejuvenescent nationality, and were, all of them, determined that since their crimes had made them to carry their lives in their hands, they would sell their lives, if sell them they must, as dearly as possible.

It might well seem, then, to our leaders, as they looked towards the great city with its famous fortress, its teeming population, its historic memories, its glorious mosques and minarets, that they had entered on a hopeless or even an absurd task. But behind that Ridge there went stretching away the Grand Trunk Road, held by faithful Sikh chiefs, and, beyond the horizon, on either side of its course, lay the Punjab, the youngest and most warlike, and yet the most trustworthy of all our possessions; and over the Punjab pre-

sided the man who had held and nursed it ever since it came into our hands, had, with the help of his brother, attached it to our rule, and was now prepared to strip it of its last available regiment, and of its most trusted and able officers—nay, if the need arose, to draw in its frontier, rather than allow the imperial enterprise which he had urged, and on which the safety of the whole, as he thought, depended, to be given up in despair. Those, then, who reflected that the Grand Trunk Road led up to a province every man of which was in his right place; that, along it, were to come to our help in rapid and continuous succession, regiments of young Sikhs who had grown up under our shadow, of old Sikhs who had fought against us, of hardy Mohammedans from the border who had often made our lives a burden to us; long lines of baggage waggons and baggage animals, vast stores of shot and shell, and of all the provisions and munitions of war; above all, men like Coke and Rothney, Daly and Taylor, Wilde and Watson, Chamberlain and Nicholson; more than this, that over the whole province, from Rawul Pindi, urging on the over-cautious, keeping back the rash, supplying the mind that moved the whole, was working, and watching and waiting the ever anxious but never despondent John Lawrence—might well take fresh heart of grace and feel that, if the impossible could be done at all, it was through him that it would be done.

CHAPTER XVII.

MUTINY-POLICY OF JOHN LAWRENCE.

MAY-JUNE 1857.

IN the last chapter I have endeavoured to bring into clear relief the steps taken by Sir John Lawrence to ensure that a speedy blow should be struck, not at the limbs but at the heart of the rebellion, and have described the muster and the march of our small army, which, even then, had begun to feel something of his presence or of his spirit in its midst, from the cool heights of Simla to the burning fiery furnace before Delhi. It remained for him now to justify the advice —the foolhardy advice as many deemed it—which he had given; and while he kept his own province in hand and carried on its administration almost as though it had been a time of profound peace, to supply men and money, and all the material of war for the prosecution of that vast and perilous enterprise. How did he set about it?

Lahore and Umritsur had been saved, and Ferozepore and Phillour strengthened, by Montgomery and his coadjutors, while as yet, happily for the English rule, the disastrous news which flashed along the wires had reached the ears of the English authorities alone. But what of the more remote parts of the Punjab, of Mooltan and Sealkote, of Huzara and the Derajat? Above all, what of Peshawur? There were dangers in every course that could be taken. But a few hours' consideration sufficed to show John Lawrence the course in which there were the fewest, and he straightway plunged into it.

Trust the Irregulars and the natives of the Punjab generally, but utterly distrust the Regular army. Utilise the Irregulars in every way you can. Bring them in from the frontier, where their work has been well done to the points of danger in the interior of the country, where they may have plenty of work of a novel kind. Add largely

to the numbers of each existing regiment. Raise fresh regiments, as occasion may require, but do so under proper precautions, remembering that the weapon with which you are arming yourselves may, unless it is well wielded, be turned against yourselves. As for the Regulars, watch them, isolate them, send them to detached frontier forts, where the population are naturally hostile to them, and where it will be difficult for them to act in concert. If any symptoms of mutiny show themselves, disarm them at once. If mutiny breaks forth into act, destroy them, if possible, on the spot. If they take to flight, raise the native populations against them and hunt them down. A few stern examples at first will save much bloodshed in the end. Find out the Sikh chiefs living in your respective districts, and enlist their martial instincts and their natural hatred of the Hindustanis on your side at once. Collect camels and beasts of burden at suitable spots, so that the troops who are moving to the front may face the enemy in the best possible condition. Concentrate bodies of mounted police, so that they may move down on any threatened point in force and crush disturbance at the outset. Remove all Hindustanis from posts of trust or importance. Arrest every wandering Fakir, guard every ferry, examine every Sepoy's letter. Keep the regular work of the administration going everywhere. If you are calm yourself, you will help others to be calm also. Don't be afraid of acting on your own responsibility, but keep me informed of anything and everything that happens, and of anything and everything that you do. Such, in bare outline, are the general maxims which run through all Sir John Lawrence's letters to all his subordinates throughout his province during these first days of the Mutiny.

Accordingly, in obedience to his fiat, and in some cases—notably at Peshawur and Lahore—in anticipation of it, every official in the Punjab was on the alert, and acting as if the safety of the whole province depended on his single exertions.

> No thought of flight,
> None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
> That argued fear; each on himself relied,
> As only in his arm the moment lay
> Of victory.

One of the five native regiments which guarded, or endangered, Peshawur, and was considered to be the most tainted of them all, had been broken up by Cotton and Edwardes, on the day on which

the news of the Meerut outbreak reached them, into detachments, and sent to guard the solitary frontier posts of Michni, Shubkudder, and Abazai, against an imaginary invasion of the Mohmunds! On the same day, the suspected 55th, which was quartered at Noushera, at the other end of the Peshawur Valley, and might, perhaps, intercept free communication between it and Attock, was sent sixteen miles northwards to Murdan in the hills, the Head-quarters of the famous Guide Corps. At once, by John Lawrence's directions, that matchless corps marched down under Daly to Noushera, and, without stopping to take breath there, were off again to Attock, and thence—a worthy anticipation of General Roberts's march from Cabul to Candahar—moved on again, with hardly a pause, in their amazing race for Delhi. At once, with John Lawrence's leave, Edwardes and Nicholson, his veteran 'wardens of the marches,' utilising their local influence and reputation, called, as they had been the first to suggest, upon the wild khans of the Derajat to raise a thousand Mooltani horse in our support. At once, from all points of the northern and western frontier, regiments of Irregulars hurried in to do garrison duty in the posts of danger, to join the Movable Column, or to prepare for an ultimate advance on Delhi. Such was the 1st Punjab Infantry under Coke, whom the unwearying patience and forbearance of John Lawrence had managed, in spite of his impracticability, to retain at Bunnoo even to this day of trial; such the 2nd Punjab Infantry, under Green, from Dera Ghazi Khan; the 4th, under Wilde, from Bunnoo; the 5th, under Vaughan, from Kohat; and a wing of the 2nd Punjab Cavalry, under Charles Nicholson, from the same place. From the cool retreat of Murri, in the extreme north, came down the Kumaon battalion of little Ghoorkas, while, on the principle of compensation, the 39th Regular Infantry at Jhelum, who were known to be mutinously disposed, were, with admirable judgment, sent out, by John Lawrence's advice, to take the places of the faithful Irregulars in the lonely and distant Derajat, till, amidst the burning heat and the discomforts of the march, their mutinous spirit, and indeed all their spirit, seemed to melt away and evaporate. Once more, too, the redoubtable Futteh Khan Khuttuck came to the front in our defence, and, raising a hundred Pathans, helped us to hold the all-important position of the Attock ferry.

And here I may remark that it was fortunate for John Lawrence himself, and fortunate also for the Punjab and for India, that he happened, at the outbreak of the Mutiny, to be, not at Lahore, but

at Rawul Pindi. In the first place, the heat which had wrought such havoc with his constitution in recent years, and had all but driven him to England in this, if it had not killed him outright, would certainly have gravely impaired his powers of work. And, in the second place, if he had been at the head-quarters of his Government, a thousand petty questions, which, in the admirable order that had long prevailed in his province and was not seriously disturbed even now, could be just as well settled by his subordinates as by himself, would, inevitably, have been referred to him direct. A hundred official forms would have had to have been observed, and many hundreds of interviews would have been forced upon him. For everyone who had a hobby of his own—and who, in those trying days, was not likely to have many hobbies of his own?—would have been anxious to press it personally on his chief. He would thus have been overwhelmed by matters of detail, and worry would have taken much of the time and strength which might have been given to work. From all this his absence at Rawul Pindi happily helped to save him. In Montgomery, in Macleod, in Macpherson, in Roberts, at Lahore; in Edwardes, in Nicholson, in Cotton, at Peshawur, he had admirable lieutenants, men with whom to think was to act, to see a danger was to overcome it, men who worked behind his back as hard, perhaps harder, than they would have worked under his eye; while from Montgomery, in particular, he received, every second day, a report which contained the pith of all the reports sent in to Lahore from all the District officers of the eastern part of the Punjab.

Nor could he, by any possibility, have been better placed than where he was. Rawul Pindi was on the Grand Trunk Road, in a position which gave him easy access alike to his northern and to his western frontier. The telegraph brought him into instantaneous communication with the important position of Peshawur, and with the master spirits who were at work under him there, while, in other directions, he could flash his wishes, his suggestions, or his commands to Lahore, to Umballa, to Jullundur, to Kurnal, to the Ridge before Delhi, and, till all communication was cut off, perhaps happily cut off, with the Supreme Government, to Calcutta itself. 'I like issuing orders by telegraph,' he used to say, 'because they cannot give me their reasons, nor ask me for mine.' He was thus near enough to every point of importance, without being too near to any one of them. He was freed from the strife of tongues, and from that multitude of

counsellors in which, if Solomon could always find wisdom, even Solomon could not have found the energy, the vigour, the promptitude, the unity of action, which the crisis required. Freed from the petty worries of official life, he was able to take a calmer, a wider, and a truer view of the struggle as a whole, than those who were in the thick of it. With the exception of his 'acting' secretary, James, and of Edward Thornton, the Commissioner of the district, who used to look in each day to see him, and has, in conversation, given me a vigorous description of his energy, his calmness, and his heroism, he was quite alone, and, perched on that elevated spot, he was able,

Like falcon from her cairn on high,

to take a bird's eye view of his whole province, to keep it all within his grasp, and to look beyond it again to Bombay and Delhi, to Cabul and to Calcutta, to the Persian war that was just over, and to the Chinese war that was just beginning, and to estimate the influence which each might be made to bear upon the whole. He knew the idiosyncrasies of each among his subordinates, the dyspeptic, the sanguine, the cautious, the melancholic, the mercurial, the saturnine, and so was able to rate the reports they sent in to him at exactly their proper value. He knew how to administer a word of encouragement or a word of caution; how, where the occasion called for it, to pour forth a flood of generous and unstinted praise; and how again, though this was rare with such officers as he had gathered round him, to deal a sledge-hammer rebuke. He was too wise—to adopt a metaphor of which he was fond—not to give 'his horses their head.' But even the best of them felt that the coachman was always on the coach-box, that his finger was always on the reins, and that his eye was always looking ahead for dangers on the road, which they, with their blinkers on—immersed that is, in the multitudinous cares of their immediate province—could not possibly see as well as he. They felt it, and they were glad of it. For they felt that he had the best of rights to rule; that if he made too little allowance for personal or private weaknesses, it was only because of his overflowing zeal for the public good; that if he plied them, when they were weary, with whips, he lashed himself with scorpions; that if he never spared them, still less did he ever spare himself.

How he worked and how he planned, what wide views he took, is known, in a measure, to all who worked under him, and to all who have ever studied the history of the Indian Mutiny. But, perhaps,

few can know it so well as his biographer, who has had to follow him, day by day and almost hour by hour, through the enormous piles of documents which every corner of his province poured in upon him, and which he poured back, with interest, on every corner of his province. Each of Sir John Lawrence's subordinates knows, of course better than anyone else can do, how his chief dealt with him individually. But no one who has not had the opportunity, which has fallen to my lot, of studying the correspondence as a whole, can know so well how he dealt with them collectively, how he held every thread within his hand, how he swept with his eye the petty process of raising a dozen *sowars* in the Derajat as keenly as, through his correspondence with Barnard, and Reed, and Wilson, with Greathed and Norman, with Chamberlain and Nicholson, he was able to follow, and, in a sense, to influence or direct every step of the great drama which was slowly and painfully unfolding itself upon the Ridge before Delhi.

When the news of the outbreak first reached Sir John, Lady Lawrence was at his side. But, a few days later, she was obliged, sorely against her will, to go on to Murri with her children, leaving him to face what he and she at once instinctively felt would be the greatest crisis of his life, alone. A line or two of hers giving her recollections of these few eventful days will be read with interest :—

As to his private affairs, my husband's first act was to write to his brother-in-law, Dr. Bernard, and give all the necessary directions regarding his children, and the slender provision which we had, up to that time, been able to make for them. He saw and felt the possibility that neither of us would be spared to return home. But he never for a moment lost heart. He only 'put his house in order,' so as to be ready for whatever might happen. After that, he gave himself up entirely to his work and left all care for his private affairs alone. What he did and how he worked is well known, and how mercifully he was kept in health and strength. All the neuralgia disappeared in the excitement, and, night and day, he was equal to all demands. What kept him well at this time was, I believe, above all else, his power of sleeping. When telegrams came at night he would get up, do what he could at the time, and then was able to sleep soundly till some other call aroused him. All the current work was kept going, in addition to the demands made on him by the Mutiny. I was obliged to go up to Murri with our children, while he remained for two months at Rawul Pindi, and then went down to Lahore. It was an awful time of suspense. For my own part, I could only feel how thankful I was that I had not gone home to England, for, although we

were parted, we had constant communication. He managed to write a few lines to me every day, and I knew, somehow or other, if it had been necessary, that I should find my way to him.

It is true enough, as Lady Lawrence remarks here, that, in the excitement of the moment and the first rush of work, all the neuralgia did disappear But it is equally true that after her departure, as some letters written, not to her but to his intimate friends, show, there was a terrible reaction. The neuralgia returned, and much of his very best and hardest work was done while he was writhing under it! One person still living, Edward Thornton, the Commissioner of the Rawul Pindi Division, saw much of John Lawrence during this eventful time, and I am able, from a suggestive conversation with him, to recall a characteristic touch or two respecting it. And I would remark first by anticipation, that Thornton was not, in the ordinary sense of the word, brought up in 'the school' of John Lawrence. He never 'sat at his feet.' He was his equal in age; and at Haileybury; and, in his earlier life in India, was his equal also in promise and in performance. What he says therefore is spoken, not with the enthusiastic and, perhaps, overstrained zeal of a disciple, but with the cool and deliberate appreciation of a contemporary who had been distanced by him.

John Lawrence's was not (he said to me in conversation) a very *originating* mind. In the Mutiny it was not his place, except on rare occasions, to originate. It was to receive suggestions from all quarters, to ponder over them, to assimilate them, and then to decide. His, in fact, was the *mind* throughout. He had to keep some people, like Edwardes and Nicholson, back—to put the drag on; others, like Anson, or Barnard, or Wilson, to make to go faster—to keep them up to the mark. It was he who avoided mistakes and prevented other people making them. He would listen to, and, apparently, be influenced by all arguments brought to bear on him, often by shrewder or more ready men than himself, but he always brought them back at last to the test of his own admirable common sense. I was not at all prejudiced in his favour to start with, or even at the time. But, looking back now on all that happened, I can see clearly that it is he and none of his subordinates who can be said to have saved the Punjab.

There were all the ways of a brave man about him. He would sit outside of his house with James and me, discussing matters with perfect calmness, and, when quite worn out with fatigue, he would throw his huge burly body on his bed just inside the door, and continue the conversation from thence. At first, he had no guard at all, and it was only the

strong representations of the Council of War, composed of Reed, Edwardes, Chamberlain, and Frederick Roberts, which had assembled at his house, that could induce him to post so much as a single sentry near it. And, even then, I noticed that the guard was placed in such a position on one side of the house that there would have been no sort of difficulty in an assassin entering by the other and making short work of him as he lay asleep upon his bed.

John Lawrence, I would remark here, had shown himself, from his earliest days, to be quite above any feeling of physical fear. On one occasion, during the second Sikh war, when insurrection was rife all around, he was sleeping in a lonely station, after a hard day's work, the sleep of the just and the fearless. At dead of night there was an alarm, and one of his assistants came in, pale with terror, and exclaimed in an excited tone, 'Do you know that we are in a *cul-de-sac*?' Hang the *cul-de-sac*,' replied the awakened and intrepid sleeper, and turned over in his bed, and had the rest of his sleep out.

I came in one day (continued Edward Thornton) when things seemed to be about as hopeless as it was possible for them to do, and found him sitting alone, with his papers before him, his coat and waistcoat thrown off, his neck and arms bare, his head thrown back, looking the picture, as I thought, of firmness and resolution. 'I think there *is* a chance, Thornton,' he said to me, and, as he said it, I thought he looked the man to make it so. If he died, I felt that he would die hard; and if our lives were saved, I felt then and I feel still, that it was to him we should owe and have owed them. I saw him during the first two months of the Mutiny on every day but one. On that day I went, as usual, to his house and found him gone. He had actually slipped off to see his wife at Murri! It was a flagrant escapade. He had no excuse. But he couldn't help it. He travelled up as fast as he could go, saw his wife for a brief interval, assured himself of her well-being, and was back again at his work within twenty-four hours.

A pleasant touch of human nature; some may think it of human weakness, this! But in any case, it is one of which I should have been sorry not to have heard, and should be still more sorry, having heard, not to have recorded. It is not merely that it is an oasis in the desert, a refreshing interlude in the din of arms, the mustering and the moving of troops, and the multitudinous cares of government, but it, surely, makes us appreciate the man not less but more, when we find that there was one weak point in the spear-proof armour even of 'Iron John.'

All other claims, such as men cast in a less heroic mould might be disposed, at times, to make much of—the claims of family or friends, of comfort or recreation, of health or wealth—John Lawrence habitually and rigorously subordinated to his public duty. They were as nothing in his eyes compared to it. There was one being and only one in the world whose claims upon him he would have allowed to weigh for a moment against those of the public service. To her wants, even when he was at his busiest, he always found time to attend. It was a happy anomaly, a heaven-sent weakness in that heart of oak and triple brass, for which few will think him to be less and many may think him to be even a greater man. It was the sentiment, the romance, the poetry of his hard, unresting, toilful life. It was more than this. It was the undercurrent of the whole of his life, even though it is possible to catch, only at fitful intervals, the echoes of its undersong. One of the great rivers of Spain plunges at a certain point in its course into the ground and flows beneath it for nearly thirty miles. But, at certain intervals, it throws up pools to the surface which the natives with unconscious poetry call '*los ojos del Guadiana*,' the eyes of the Guadiana. They are only pools, but they are sure and certain signs that the majestic river is flowing on in uninterrupted course below. So was it with John Lawrence, and on such bubblings up to the surface of the undercurrent of his life and his domestic happiness I may be allowed to dwell from time to time, and, without tearing aside the veil or revealing aught that by being revealed loses half its beauty, to point out what they imply.

One such incident, unique in its neatness and its unconscious beauty, I have related, by anticipation, in the early part of this volume.[1] Another more commonplace but still characteristic anecdote may find a place here. One day, John Lawrence was discussing with one of the ablest of his subordinates the question whether a settlement officer could do the work of his settlement better if he were married or unmarried. John Lawrence thought that the unmarried man could do it best. His subordinate thought the married, and endeavoured to clench his view of the matter by saying, 'You know you have often told me that no one could do the heavy work of the settlement better than I have done.' 'Ah,' replied his chief, 'but then you are such a bad husband!' He meant that his lieutenant was so absorbed in his work that he did not give the time and attention to his wife which every husband ought to give her.

[1] See p. 125.

Here was John Lawrence's theory and practice combined. The 'flagrant escapade' to Murri which I have just described is another 'eye of the Guadiana,' and not the least characteristic of the three. The man who, in later years, looking back on his past life could say with truth that he had married his wife because 'he could not be happy for five minutes without her,' might well be excused if, during the long agony of the Mutiny, he snatched one breathing space of a few hours which would give him fresh strength for the present and fresh hope for the future. He gave in but once to the yearnings of his heart because, as Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, he was primarily responsible for its safety, and because he was working to that end as few men have ever worked. He did give in that once, because, with all his external roughness and all his absolute devotion to his public duties, he was a true and tender-hearted man.

But it is time that I should justify what I have said as to the multiplicity of Sir John Lawrence's labours, his energy, his enthusiasm, his prudence, by such evidence as a few meagre extracts from his letters, written during the early weeks of the Mutiny, can give. They must be taken as samples, and they are samples of the whole. And, first, let us notice his caution.

To Montgomery, who was practically his *locum tenens* at Lahore, he writes, May 15 :—

Farrington should not authorise the Raja of Kupurthulla to raise men. I telegraphed this to him some days ago, but he may not have received the message. I think there may be as much danger from his levies as from others.

I have sent a message to Macpherson to arrange with you to relieve the police horse and police battalion men as much as possible, substituting *Burkandaze* in their room, raising men for the purpose. But arrange so as to mix old and new men as far as possible, and keep at the jails a small body of military police as a rallying point. The object, of course, is to have the mounted and battalion policemen ready for rows or emergency of any kind. Entertain as many men as are *really necessary*, but no more. We must husband our resources. Money may become scarce.

He writes to Montgomery again, on May 18, suggesting another caution which was, perhaps, still more essential in this early stage of the Mutiny :—

I was very ill nearly all day yesterday, but got off various messages. I do not like to raise *large* bodies of the *old* Sikhs. I recollect their strong nationality, how completely they were demoralised for some twelve years before annexation, and how much they have to gain by our ruin. I will

not therefore consent to raise levies of the old Sikhs. There is a strong feeling of sympathy between Sikhs and Hindus, and though I am willing to raise Sikhs gradually and carefully, I wish to see them mixed with Mohammedans and hillmen. I would not, in any case, raise more men than are absolutely necessary; for if a blow is not soon struck, we may have all the natives against us, and nothing but our Europeans to rely on. We are raising a thousand Mooltan horse in the Derajat, besides levies in Huzara and Dera Ghazi Khan, and four companies for each of the eighteen regiments of Punjab infantry and police battalions. All these will give fully 10,000 men. Cortlandt is raising also one thousand men for service at Ferozepore. Long before all these are ready, if absolutely necessary, we can raise more. But we should do our best to get either tried and loyal men, or, at any rate, young fellows not imbued with the ancient leaven.

I may add here that experience soon convinced John Lawrence that even the old Sikhs of the Malwa might be trusted, and, once convinced of this, he employed them with a right good will and with the best results.

Next let us notice his care for the well-being of all classes committed to his charge, as evidenced by the minute directions he gives concerning them.

To Monckton, Deputy Commissioner at Sealkote, May 19:—

The larger portion of the troops at Sealkote have been ordered to Wuzeerabad to join the Movable Column. All the European families are to go into Lahore, or so far on the way until they meet a similar party from Lahore. If you want carriage, get aid from Gujranwalla and Lahore. The Deputy Commissioner of Lahore will be told to send you as many good carts and one-horsed '*ekkas*' as he can collect. The more ladies that can go into Lahore the better. There they will be safe and free from alarm.

To Ousely, Deputy Commissioner at Shahpore, May 20:—

We hear that Coke was not to leave Bunnoo before the 19th, yesterday: so you will have ample time to catch him at Esau Khail. Collect as many camels as may appear necessary, not less than 400 for each regiment (Coke's and Wilde's), and either have them ready at Shahpore or send them to meet the corps. Perhaps the best plan will be to send one hundred or so to meet each regiment, and keep the rest ready at Shahpore. These camels are for the men to ride upon, and so enable the regiments to push on by double marches. Pray look to this, and do not fail to have the camels. We cannot foresee how much may depend on these arrangements.

To Montgomery, May 21 :—

All well here, but I doubt if the Commander-in-Chief will do any good. All those about him are wretched pottering fellows, except Norman. It would not do to offer him Edwardes, and, to tell the truth, he is wanted where he is. If anything happened to Nicholson at Peshawur the Brigadier there would be without a guide. I have, however, offered the Commander-in-Chief any officer he may like, and of course, if he selects Edwardes, he shall go. Collect lots of camels at Lahore ; Sirdar Khan of Mojang and others can procure them. We are sending on the Guides, 4th Sikhs, Coke's and Wilde's regiments, all on camels, two men on each, so as to bring them up to the scratch as fresh as possible. The Commander-in-Chief also, perhaps, may require some carriage. Whatever is entertained have regularly paid. Guides will be at Jhelum to-morrow. Lieutenant C. Nicholson, with a hundred and ninety sabres of the 2nd Punjab Cavalry, behind them one day. Rothney's corps comes in on the 22nd. Coke's and Wilde's move on Shahpore straight to Lahore. My face is terribly bad, but I work as well as I can.

And then follows the gush of praise to Montgomery and his coadjutors at Lahore which I have already quoted.

To Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, May 21 :—

We are all well in this quarter, but nothing has, as yet, been done to check the insurrection. The Commander-in-Chief has not yet moved from Umballa on Meerut or Delhi, and the troops at the former place seem paralysed. We are pouring down Irregulars from the frontier towards Lahore, to push on and assist the Commander-in-Chief in his forward movement to relieve Meerut, recover Delhi, or succour Agra and the North-West. If the Irregular troops remain staunch, all will go well. The danger is that if we delay they may fall away, and the European troops, worn down by the climate, be destroyed gradually. We shall hold Peshawur as long as possible, and then concentrate on Lahore. We are still retaining our hold throughout the country, and the people are loyal and obedient. Please, as a precautionary measure, have money ready at Kurrachi for us. Steamers on the Indus would prove very useful, and enable us to hold Mooltan.

To Major Marsden, Deputy Commissioner at Ferozepore, where John Lawrence, rightly or wrongly, thought that there had been some bungling by the military authorities, and where there, certainly, was much bungling a little later on, he wrote as follows :—

May 22.

I was glad to hear of your exertions at Ferozepore. Had the magazine been taken it would have proved a most disastrous blow to us. All

I regret is that so few of the mutineers were killed, so little example made. To think that they attack our magazine, burn our church and bungalows, and then get clear off, seems to me very lamentable. I would have opened on them with grape, and done everything in my power to destroy as many as possible. It is absolutely necessary to make an example. I trust that nothing will tempt the Brigadier to trust a man of them.

To Major Hamilton, Commissioner at Mooltan, the one link of communication which remained open between the Punjab and the outer world, and a place where there were only sixty European artillerymen to keep in check 3,500 natives, many of whom were indubitably tainted, he writes as follows. It was obvious that force could do little, with such odds against us, but tact, and prudence, and precaution might do much :—

May 22.

The civil and military authorities have done well at Mooltan. Pray do not relax in any of your precautions, and do not trust the Regular infantry. Make every effort to put the old fort into as defensible a state as possible. Throw up breastworks and cover so as to enable a few stout soldiers to resist many. Arrange for temporary cover there. At the first alarm, get in all the ladies, women, and children. Any levies you may deem necessary, any promises you may make, any rewards you may grant, I will support. Any expenditure which Lieutenant Rose may make, by your authority, will be allowed. We have ordered the 1st Punjab Cavalry and 2nd Punjab Infantry over from Asni and Dera Ghazi Khan to Mooltan. If all is quiet when they arrive, we propose that the Punjab cavalry come on to Ferozepore to reinforce the Commander-in-Chief at Kurnal. A European corps of infantry has been ordered up from Kurrachi to Mooltan; try and arrange for some kind of cover for them. We *must* hold Mooltan to the last. Five regiments of European infantry concentrating from Madras on Calcutta !

If the native infantry break out, I hope you will do your best to destroy them, and, if they disperse, the country people should be urged to follow them and plunder them, and, if they resist, destroy them. Their arms should be brought in and the plunder go to the captors.

Such a letter from John Lawrence was like an electric shock. By extraordinary skill and energy on the part of the authorities the outbreak at Mooltan was warded off from day to day, till at last, when the rising at Jullundur made a similar rising at Mooltan to be a matter of certainty, John Lawrence, as we shall see hereafter, determined to run what he deemed to be the lesser risk. A positive order went forth that the disarmament should be attempted, and, with an extraordinary mixture of audacity and skill, it was not only attempted

but accomplished, and that without shedding a drop of blood, by Major Crawford Chamberlain, whom the Chief Commissioner had selected for the dangerous honour.

A short letter to Barnes indicates the policy towards the protected Sikh chieftains, great and small, of the Cis-Sutlej States which had already produced such good results:—

May 23.

Borrow as much money as you require from Nabha and Puttiala. Urge on the Commander-in-Chief to have a military commission to try and hang the men of the 45th N.I. who have been boned. It will have a good effect. Men caught red-handed in the perpetration of murder and attempt at murder should be shot. We are all well in spite of the chiefs being against us at Peshawur. We are raising men and holding the country, coercing and overawing the Regular troops. Any reasonable promises you may make to chiefs and influential men I will support.

The following, to Montgomery, indicates Sir John Lawrence's opinion of the redoubtable Hodson, who was just then coming to the front again, and shows that he could be stern and thoroughgoing enough with the mutineers when severity was needed. It is all the more desirable to lay stress on this now, as I hope to show hereafter that, unlike many of his countrymen, he was prepared to temper justice with mercy, the moment that it was possible to do so. He was never reckless of human life; he struck that he might save and only that he might save; and he protested with all the energy of his nature against promiscuous bloodshed, and against that indiscriminate vengeance which was the order of the day at Delhi for so many months after it had fallen into our hands, and when all resistance was at an end:—

May 23.

My dear Robert,—Pray resist all reaction, all returns of tenderness and sympathy for the mutineers. It is true that they have failed in their attempts to ruin us, but this is no cause for our making fools of ourselves, and beginning to think that they have been sinned against. I feel no confidence whatever in the native Regulars, but I see no objection to our taking a few of those who have not committed themselves with the Movable Force—guns and Europeans being told off to destroy them on the first sign of disobedience. I hope and believe that good will arise out of all the evil which has occurred. But if our officers already begin to sympathise with these scoundrels I shall despair of any reform.

Hodson is an officer of tried courage and great capacity, but a *mauvais sujet* after all. I am glad we are not to have him. Help him by all means, but too many men raised by an influential man, if for per-

manent service, are not good, if, only for the nonce, it does no harm. My reason for not advocating taking men for permanent service from chiefs is this: they will certainly stick in a good many rips. If these are allowed to remain, the *ressalah* (troop of horse) is inefficient; if turned out, the chief is aggrieved. I am glad you gave the telegraph men a month's pay; they have deserved it well.

The letters I have just quoted will give some idea of the multiplicity of details and of the minute local and personal peculiarities which John Lawrence had to keep in mind throughout. I have selected them for this purpose, rather than because of their intrinsic interest or importance, and it will be observed that I have taken them all from the correspondence of the first fortnight of the Mutiny.

The following extract from a letter which was written to Lord Canning at the close of that first fortnight, and contained a masterly review of the progress of the Mutiny and of his measures for its suppression, will show that he never allowed himself to be lost in the details of his work, but that he was able, thus early, to look forward to the measures which would render a pacification not only possible but durable:—

May 23.

My Lord,—Your Lordship will, no doubt, have received all the news from this quarter. I asked Mr. Barnes, the Commissioner of the Cis-Sutlej Division, to send on all the information which might appear desirable. I believe, with God's help, we shall do well, hold our own, and be able to reinforce the Commander-in-Chief. The great point is that he should advance on Meerut, extricate the force there, and enable them to act.[1] He will then be in a position either to move on Delhi or down the Doab towards Agra, as circumstances may dictate. . . .

We must continue anxious as long as Delhi holds out and the insurrection about Meerut is not put down. So long as the Irregulars remain loyal, all must go well; but if they turn against us we shall have a difficult game, and shall then have to abandon the frontier and concentrate our European force. But, even then, I think we shall be able to hold our own until the cold weather. Some natives will always remain true to a compact body of Europeans who show a firm front. The Irregulars are behaving admirably at present; the only danger which I foresee is that which may arise from their seeing us stand on the defensive. The country also is with us, and the people are behaving loyally.

[1] The force at Meerut only needed 'extrication' from its own utter helplessness and incapacity. It never was in the least danger after May 10.

Edwardes and Nicholsbn are raising new levies, and, on the whole, I think we shall be able to hold Peshawur, even if all the native infantry revolt. At this place (Rawul Pindi), we have 200 European infantry, mostly weak men, but able to fight, and a troop of capital European artillery. We have also one regiment of native infantry who have hitherto behaved well, and whom we can overpower, if necessary. Lahore, Ferozepore, and Jullundur are all safe at present, and I have no anxiety for any of them except Jullundur, where the native troops still retain their arms, and may be reinforced from Hoshiarpore and Phillour. The magazines at Phillour and Ferozepore, as well as the forts of Lahore and Govindghur, are garrisoned by Europeans, and we are putting provisions in them.

Your Lordship need not fear for us. We have some excellent officers in the Punjab, and all, both civil and military, are united and resolved to maintain our own honour and the security of our power if it can be done. No officers could have managed better.

I earnestly hope that your Lordship will not authorise the raising of any new *Regular* native infantry of any kind. If ever we are to have a thorough and radical reform of the native army, it will be now. No half-measures will do. Nothing short of the late transactions would convince us of the folly and weakness of the old system. Pray, my Lord, don't authorise any proposition for converting Irregular regiments into Regulars. In a few years, they will be little better than the old ones. The men will not like, and the native officers will dislike it, for they will become nonentities. Those Regular native infantry corps which remain faithful can be maintained. All others should be disbanded. By keeping up more Irregulars we shall obtain the means of meeting the extra cost of additional European regiments.

I would further suggest that all native regiments who have not actually fought against us, but have shown by their conduct what was in their hearts, be hereafter disbanded. We might have three classes; the really faithful, to be maintained, and even, in especial cases, to be rewarded; the discontented and mutinous who have held cantonments in which fires have constantly occurred, to be disbanded; and thirdly, the insurgent troops who have fought against us, who have broken out into open mutiny, and murdered our officers. These I would hunt down as Dacoits and Thugs have been hunted down, and when caught they should be hanged, transported for life, or imprisoned for terms of years. Where native regiments, or any part of a regiment do good service, I should issue complimentary orders to them. I have suggested to the Commander-in-Chief to do so towards the 10th Cavalry at Ferozepore, and a remnant of the 3rd at Meerut.

Nor was John Lawrence content to communicate with those only

who, as his superiors or as his subordinates, had a right to look for reports or for instructions from him. The intimate knowledge of the town of Delhi, of the district, and of the inhabitants, which he had acquired during his first ten years' residence in India, he was anxious to impart to all to whom it could be of use. He had intended to issue an appeal, in his own name, to the chiefs of the Delhi district, calling on them to prove their loyalty on the approach of our army, by rallying to its support, by keeping the peace in their respective neighbourhoods, and by giving supplies and information. But finding that Hervey Greathed had been deputed by Colvin, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West—in whose charge Delhi was still, by courtesy, supposed to be—to accompany the Meerut force, he determined to act through him, and opened a correspondence with him which was kept up throughout the siege, and with the best results. In his first letter he enumerated the chiefs to whom he had proposed to appeal; advised that separate letters should be written to certain of the officers of the palace who, from his personal knowledge, he thought might be true to us at heart; described the state of the ditch, the walls, the gates of the city, as he remembered them; discussed the points where an attack might best be made; and named the villages on the road between Kurnal and Delhi where the most abundant supplies, or the boldest and most knowing spies could be obtained —men who would find little difficulty in procuring information from the interior of the city. To Colvin also he wrote direct, suggesting various precautions which had been found useful in the Punjab. In particular, he advised that each District officer in the North-West should be empowered to raise strong bodies of police, both horse and foot, which might help to keep the peace in their respective districts till the capture of Delhi should set the troops at liberty.

With Bartle Frere, the Chief Commissioner of Scinde, and the representative, therefore, of a system which was, in many respects, opposed to that of the Punjab, Sir John Lawrence was in constant communication throughout. Frere landed at Kurrachi, on his return from furlough, just in time to hear of the outbreak of the Mutiny, and he acted with a promptitude and a fearlessness of responsibility surpassed by no one in the adjoining province. John Lawrence had written to him on the day after the news reached Rawul Pindi. But Frere, without waiting to be asked, or even to get leave from Lord Elphinstone at Bombay, at once, and upon his own responsibility, sent off such reinforcements as he could spare, or could hardly spare,

to what he conceived to be the chief point of danger. With only two weak European regiments and one troop of Horse Artillery to hold in check his province of two million inhabitants and four native regiments, he sent off at once two hundred Fusiliers to Mooltan. He saw that it was on the Punjab and not on Scinde that the safety of India would, in the long run, depend, and, just as John Lawrence was resolved to denude the Punjab of troops in order to push the siege of Delhi, so, on a smaller scale, but to the utmost limit of his means, was Frere resolved to strip Scinde in order to reinforce the Punjab. 'When the head and heart are threatened,' he wrote to Lord Elphinstone, in words that have a ring about them which would have gone straight to John Lawrence's heart, 'the extremities must take care of themselves.' And he was as good as his word. The 1st Bombay Fusiliers, the 1st Beluch Battalion, the 2nd Beluch Battalion, were despatched, in rapid succession, to the Punjab, and that such all-important points as Mooltan and Ferozepore were firmly held, in spite of all the danger which threatened them, was due, in part at least, to his unstinted aid. John Lawrence writes to him thus, as early as May 28 :—

> Many thanks for your notes and all your care for us. The two hundred Europeans for Mooltan will be a grand aid. With the European artillery, one hundred strong, they will make all safe. The sooner they arrive the better ; as it will enable us to employ a corps of Punjab infantry who have come here from Dera Ghazi Khan.

And, looking back calmly at all that had happened when the crisis was over, he wrote thus in his 'Mutiny Report :'—

> From first to last, from the first commencement of the Mutiny to the final triumph, Mr. H. B. E. Frere has rendered assistance to the Punjab Administration just as if he had been one of its own Commissioners. . . The Chief Commissioner believes that probably there is no civil officer in India who, for eminent exertions, deserves better of his Government than Mr. H. B. E. Frere.

On many questions the two men differed widely from each other even then, and they came to differ more widely still as time went on. The one, looking at the extreme poverty of the people of India, was, as he said himself, for economy even to frugality, in dealing with the public money. The other, looking mainly to the vast field open to English enterprise in India, was lavish of it even to excess. The one was against all unnecessary extension of the empire. The other was

for pushing it forward alike by our arts and by our arms. The policy of the one tended to make the Afghans our friends, and helped to wipe out the memory of one of the greatest crimes and the greatest blunders we have ever committed in India. The policy of the other led, in my judgment, directly up to a renewal of that blunder and that crime, and involved us in a second and a third Afghan war. But there is no more reason to call in question the vigour, the ability, the unselfishness, the sincerity of purpose of the one than of the other. It is pleasant, at all events, to recollect that, during one period, and that, the most critical of their lives, the two men worked together with one heart and one soul for the great object, which was never long absent from the mind of either, the safety of the Empire and the welfare of all its inhabitants.

It has been remarked by the biographer of Sir Henry Lawrence that there is room in the Indian pantheon even for such fiercely conflicting spirits as Sir James Outram and Sir Charles Napier. It may surely be said, with at least equal truth, even while party spirit is still running high, and while the tremendous issues which may follow from the policy of each are still half-hidden in the womb of the future, that the Indian pantheon has room enough for the brilliant and restless and resolute representative of the 'forward,' as well as for the consistent and statesmanlike and heroic champion of the 'backward' policy—for Sir Bartle Frere as well as for Lord Lawrence.

While John Lawrence had thus been keeping his finger on the pulse of his province, a great crisis had come and gone at Peshawur. We last saw him closeted with Herbert Edwardes and with others of the wiser heads in his province, at Rawul Pindi, and, on the 21st of May, Edwardes returned to Peshawur in full possession of his chief's views, and prepared, on the first alarm, to advise the disarmament of the Regulars there. It was the very nick of time. Already, Nicholson, who was not a man to keep more troops than were absolutely necessary about him, finding that Peshawur was too weak for the dangers it had to face, had asked, by telegraph, that a wing of the 27th Regiment, which was on its way from the frontier to the interior, might be recalled to defend the Attock fort and ferry. Already, letters had been detected passing from one of the native regiments at Peshawur to the detachments in the frontier forts, naming the day on which they were all to flock into Peshawur, 'eating there and drinking here,' for such was the vigorous expression which indicated the speed that was required. Already, large piles of intercepted

correspondence were in the hands of the authorities, which seemed to show that Peshawur was only one link in the chain of preconcerted mutiny connecting the fanatics of Sitana beyond our frontier with those of Patna or Benares. And now, at midnight, a message reached Edwardes that mutinous intentions were already passing into mutinous acts at Attock, at Noushera, and at Murdan.

There was no time to be lost. Not a man could be spared from Peshawur to coerce these mutineers, while much larger numbers, with mutiny in their hearts and arms in their hands, were left behind in the cantonments there. On the other hand, in a few hours, the news which was, at present, the monopoly of the authorities would filter through to the city and the native troops, and the smouldering embers would be kindled into a flame which it might be beyond the power of the Empire to extinguish. 'Peshawur once gone,' said a trusty Sikh chief to the magistrate of Umritsur, 'the whole Punjab would roll up like this,' and as he spoke he began slowly with his finger and thumb to roll up his robe from the corner of the hem towards its centre.[1] 'You know on what a nest of devils we stand,' writes Edwardes to the Chief Commissioner. 'Once let us take our foot up, and we shall be stung to death.' And Edwardes and his companions had no intention of taking their foot up, but rather of putting it down and keeping it there.

He and Nicholson were sleeping, as they had arranged, under the same roof and in their clothes, so that they might be ready for any emergency. It was just midnight when the news of the outbreak at Noushera arrived, and it was not many minutes after midnight when they both found themselves standing by the bedside of Brigadier Cotton. Their business was soon told, and a Council of War summoned. The 'politicals' were, as usual, for instant action; the military officers, as usual, with a chivalrous blindness which it is impossible not to make allowance for, and even, in a measure, to admire, still had 'implicit confidence' in their men. High words passed. Cotton listened to both sides, and decided for disarmament. Four regiments, three of infantry and one of cavalry, were to be disarmed in the early morning; while the 21st Infantry, of whom better things were hoped, was, for the present, to be spared and trusted. It was a critical moment; almost as critical as that, a fortnight earlier, at Lahore; and, as at Lahore, the civil officers rode down to have a

[1] Cave Brown's *Punjab and Delhi*, vol. i. p. 153.

finger in the business which was to make or mar them. The four regiments might resist, as indeed some of their officers who most believed in their fidelity, with strange inconsistency, predicted that they would; they might be joined by their brethren who were to be spared for the present, but must feel that their own turn would come next; the 'legion of devils' in the city and the surrounding country would then be up, and then——

There were two Queen's regiments, two batteries of Artillery, and, strangest of all, a body of Afridi volunteers, our inveterate foes, just picked up from the Kohat pass, to do the work of disarmament, and they did it. The four suspected regiments, isolated from each other, and given no time to think or to speak, did as they were ordered; and as the heaps of piled arms grew in size, 'here and there,' says Herbert Edwardes, 'the spurs and swords of English officers fell sympathisingly on the pile.'

The effect of the disarmament, 'a master stroke,' as John Lawrence called it, was instantaneous on the surrounding district, and was soon felt along the frontier generally. Of the 2,000 Mooltani horse which had been called for by Edwardes during some days previously, only 100 had as yet responded to our call. Why should the rough borderers join what was, probably, a losing and was, certainly, a doubtful cause? But now the case was altered. 'As we rode back from the cantonments,' says Edwardes, 'friends were as thick as summer flies, and levies began from that moment to come in;' and he goes on to describe, in a graphic passage, which is, unfortunately, too long to quote here, the process of enlistment which, henceforward, went on from day to day; the eager emulation, now that there was money to be freely won and blood to be freely spilt, of every idle vagrant, of every professional robber, of every truculent student at the mosques, to join our first levies, while every unconquerably vicious brute which its owner could not ride, and every miserable screw which could hardly drag itself along to the scene of action, or even to the knacker's yard, was importunately pressed upon us, and formed the nucleus of a new Irregular—a very irregular—cavalry. And before long, even from beyond our border, villanous Afridis, Mohmunds, and Eusofzies, men who had spent their lives in robbing and killing our subjects, or belonged to tribes who were, even now, under our ban, came flocking in, with penitence in their faces and doubly-dyed rascality in their hearts, delighted to pay off old scores upon the Sepoys, whom they derisively styled the *Kala Kaum* (those niggers), to guard us against

those who should have been the first to guard us, and to hunt them down like vermin, when they had the chance.

The Peshawur garrison was now, at length, able to spare some men to act against the mutineers who had gathered at Murdan. On the evening of the day following the disarmament, a force of 300 European infantry, 250 Irregular cavalry, and 8 guns, under the command of Colonel Chute and accompanied by Nicholson as 'political officer,' set out from Peshawur, and, early on the following morning, they arrived at their destination. Seeing their approach, the 55th—with the exception of some 120 men, chiefly Punjabis, who remained with their officers—fled towards the Swat frontier. The European infantry, tired with their march, were unable to overtake them; and the Irregular cavalry showed, by their lagging pursuit, that they were not prepared to act against their brethren. It was a danger which had been long feared, but never more than half acknowledged. Now, then, was the chance for Nicholson. Putting himself at the head of a mere handful of mounted Sowars, as though he were determined to justify his chief's expression in its most literal sense, that he was 'worth the wing of a regiment,' he flung himself with 'terrible courage' on the flying foe, and, seeming to multiply himself many times over as he rode hither and thither, laid low, with his own stalwart right arm, dozens of men who, as he admitted afterwards in genuine admiration, fought desperately. Throughout that livelong day, beneath the burning heat of the sun, the pursuit continued, till one hundred and fifty Sepoys had fallen, no small proportion of them beneath Nicholson's own hand. As many more were taken prisoners, and the rest, some five hundred in number, many of them wounded, managed to escape over the friendly Swat border. It was not until seven o'clock in the evening that this new Homeric chieftain rode back to the point from which the pursuit had begun, after having been some twenty hours in the saddle, and having ridden some seventy miles without a change of horse! It was the first of those 'Nicholsonian' deeds of daring which were to end only with his life at the capture of Delhi.

A more terrible fate awaited the five hundred Sepoys who had escaped Nicholson's avenging arm. Driven out of Swat, after a miserable sojourn of a month, by its fanatical inhabitants, they managed to cross the Indus on inflated skins and rafts, and, in sheer despair, determined to attempt to make their way through the savage defiles of the tremendous precipices of Kohistan to Kashmere. But

John Becher, the Deputy Commissioner of Huzara, was on the look-out for their approach. He raised the wild mountain clans against them. With an ever-watchful enemy blocking up in front of them the goats' paths by which they moved, or pressing hard upon them in the rear, they fought or struggled on for a weary fortnight, their difficulties and dangers increasing at every step, till at last, their money spent, their strength exhausted, their weapons, many of them, thrown away in the struggle for bare life upon the slippery ledges, footsore, and haggard, and hungry, the miserable remnant, 124 in all, surrendered at discretion, and were hanged or blown away from guns in different parts of the Huzara district. Their sufferings might have touched a heart of stone, and those who knew Becher well knew that, brave as he was, his heart was of the tenderest. But he felt, and probably with good reason, that at this early and most critical stage of the Mutiny, stern severity would prove the truest mercy in the end. 'We are doing well,' writes John Lawrence, 'in every district; Becher famously.'

But, though four regiments had been disarmed and one all but annihilated, all danger was not yet over in the Peshawur District. The detachments, indeed, of the mutinous 64th which had been relegated to the frontier forts were disarmed, without difficulty, by Nicholson and Chute during the few days which followed the flight of the 55th from Murdan. But the operation was not completed a day too soon. For Ajoon Khan, a noted freebooter, who was supported by the Akhund of Swat, had already come down to our frontier, and, by pre-arrangement with the Sepoys, was on the point of being admitted into the forts. Moreover, there was the much greater danger which the pursuit at Murdan had forced us to take into account, the general disaffection of the Irregular cavalry, or, at all events, their determination not to act against their brethren. A rising on their part would, it was feared, be supported by the four regiments which had been nominally disarmed. I say *nominally* disarmed; for in a wild country like Peshawur, where every native bore arms, and almost every one was a cut-throat from his cradle onwards, weapons were always to be had for the asking, and rumour said that large quantities of them were already, or were still, secreted in the lines. Would it be better to run the tremendous risk which an attempt to disarm the three cavalry regiments would involve, or to attempt, by extra precautions, to tide over the interval; an interval, as it was then thought, not of months but of days, till the news of

the fall of Delhi should make us masters of the position? Nicholson, finding that even the camp-followers of the European regiments were talking in the bazaars of a Holy War, advised delay; and where Nicholson advised delay, everyone else might be sure that there must be grave reason for his doing so. Urgent letters were written by Nicholson himself, by Edwardes, and by Cotton, to John Lawrence, begging him to send them reinforcements, even if, in order to do so, he should find it necessary to recall troops which were already on their way to Delhi.

It was a sore trial to Sir John Lawrence. But he recognised the necessity and acted without hesitation. He ordered Wilde, who, with his splendid regiment, 700 strong, was already on his march, to turn back and hold Attock. He bade Henderson send up 250 cavalry from Kohat to Peshawur, asked Becher to send thither every man whom he could spare from Huzara, and he himself despatched 220 of the police from Rawul Pindi. 'We have not,' he writes to Edwardes, 'kept a native soldier who is worth anything here. We are very anxious for your safety. I cannot fail to see how precarious your position may prove.' General Reed had just left Rawul Pindi to assume the 'provincial' command before Delhi, and Sir John Lawrence had authorised his taking with him the Movable Column as far as Kurnal. 'It is a force,' he gleefully remarks, 'which is alone sufficient to take Delhi and to keep it.' It was a part of this very force which he was now driven to recall for the defence of Peshawur, and—to make matters worse—he was informed by Reed, about the same time, that General Johnstone, who was then at Jullundur, would be appointed Brigadier-General and take the command of the Peshawur Division which he had just vacated.

This proposal meant, as John Lawrence knew too well, that military capacity and energy of a high kind would be superseded by incapacity and vacillation. Such qualities were dangerous enough anywhere, as the experience of a few days later was to prove at Jullundur. But, at Peshawur, they would be absolutely fatal. It was no time for mincing matters or for asking himself whether he had any right to interfere. He had remonstrated boldly even with Lord Dalhousie, in time of peace, on an appointment he had intended to make to the Commissionerhip of Peshawur and had won the day, and he was not likely, therefore, to be silent with Lord Canning now. He had taken on himself, as soon as he heard of Anson's death, to suggest to the Governor-General by telegraph that Patrick Grant, a

man 'who knew and understood the Sepoys and had good common sense and knowledge of his profession,' should be summoned from Madras to take the Command-in-Chief; and now he telegraphed even more urgently, requesting that Cotton and not Johnstone should succeed to the post for which his previous services and his present position marked him out. 'I am afraid,' he wrote to Edwardes, 'that it is too heterodox an arrangement to prove acceptable.' But Lord Canning felt that it was heterodoxy and not orthodoxy which must save India, and he accepted the suggestion. 'I hope,' writes Sir John Lawrence to General Reed, 'that General Johnstone will not be sent up here. No officer could have managed better than Brigadier S. Cotton, and, if he is superseded, I do not know what will happen. I beg that General Johnstone may be kept where he is, or, at all events, not sent up to Rawul Pindi to command this Division.'

A letter to Lord Canning, dated May 29, will, perhaps, give the best general view of the immediate crisis at Peshawur, and of the steps which Sir John Lawrence had already taken, or proposed to take, to meet it:—

My Lord,—We are all right in the Punjab. Our only danger lies at Peshawur, and this is in consequence of the sympathy shown by the Irregular Cavalry towards those concerned in the present disaffection. I have, for some time, heard that this force had expressed an intention not to act against the Regulars; and this was openly shown in the affair at Murdan on the 26th. At present, there is danger of an invasion from Swat, which would be joined by the disaffected regiments in the valley. I have done all I can to reinforce the Europeans. We started off from this place every man we could muster of the Police Battalion, even to the guard of the jail. We have left Huzara to care for itself, and ordered up some cavalry from Kohat. These will be in the valley in three days, and Wilde's regiment of 800 riflemen will, probably, be there also in ten. We have recalled the 24th Queen's from the Movable Column. In the meantime, the European Infantry and guns, fighting in the open, will beat down all opposition. The danger arises mainly from the season of the year and the exposure which the men must undergo. They have, however, a few staunch companies of the Punjab force. Two, under Major Vaughan, were present in the skirmish on the 26th, and gave a party with the Europeans to shoot the seven men condemned to death on the 27th.

I hope your lordship will accede to my proposal to give their discharge to such men of the Regular Native Army as may desire it. At present,

particularly on the frontier, they are a source of difficulty and danger to us. We have to guard against them and hold the country. With arms in their hands and in organised bodies they are dangerous. Without arms, and turned adrift, they can do nothing. Some few may go to swell the insurgent body. But this is of no consequence. The greater portion will make for their homes. At present, officers cannot discern the good from the bad, the discontented from the well-disposed. The licence to depart would act as a safety-valve under such circumstances. The measure would have the advantage of economy, which, at this time, is also a consideration. There can be no fear that we shall not be able to raise Native troops enough. We might raise 80,000, in the Punjab alone, in the next three months. The Punjabis say that God has sent this disturbance to give them a fair share of the Company's employment. I am, however, by no means an advocate for raising *too many* of this class.

He enclosed this letter in one to Barnes, because he hoped that the Cis-Sutlej Commissioner might find a quicker means of transmitting it than the voyage round India. 'Send on this letter,' he said, 'to the Governor-General by a safe route. I hope you will act with vigour and firmness against all evil-doers. Now is the time to beat down disorder with an iron hand.'

It may have been observed that I have repeatedly quoted letters in which Sir John Lawrence advocates strong measures in dealing with the mutineers. And I have done so purposely, in order that I may now lay all the more stress on what implies the possession of much rarer and more admirable qualities, and marks him out as pre-eminently the man to have held the reins of power at such a crisis—I mean his rigid sense of justice, and his determination, while he was for severity, so long as severity was necessary or was likely to prove mercy in the end, not to allow a drop of blood to be shed in the mere luxury or wantonness of revenge. Unlike some of his subordinates, and unlike, it may be added without injustice, too many of our countrymen, at that terrible time both in India and at home, he kept his head throughout. He never joined in the cry for indiscriminate vengeance, a cry which he thought to be as impolitic as it was un-Christian and unjust, and which was sometimes heard most loudly in quarters where it was least to be expected or excused. He knew, as his letters show, how much there was to be said in extenuation of the Sepoys' guilt; how much the blindness of the authorities had contributed towards it; how much was due to their state of blind panic, to their credulity, to their love for their religion.

He knew how many, with intentions the most loyal, were hurried away by the stream, and, like many other good men and true, who, happily for our fair fame, chanced, at that time, to be filling the most responsible situations in the country, he thought it alike unstatesmanlike and unjust,—when once the necessary example had been made,—not to draw distinctions of guilt, not to leave a place for repentance, not to put a strict restraint on the wild yearning for revenge. In this respect, he deserves to be placed side by side with the noble-minded Governor-General, whose nick-name of 'Clemency,' first given to him in England as a term of the bitterest reproach, will, through all history, like that of the 'Cunctator' at Rome, form his highest title to the admiration and gratitude of Englishmen.

From the very beginning of his high official career John Lawrence had set his face against the lax notions of justice and of legal evidence which, owing chiefly to their want of civil and legal training, prevailed among some of the ablest of his soldier-subordinates. Again and again the civil authorities at Lahore had been driven to overrule wholesale the capital sentences, passed by honest but hastily judging District officers on the frontier. On one occasion, a dozen such sentences for murder were sent up from Peshawur to be ratified by the central authorities at Lahore; each charge being substantiated only by the unsupported assertion of one single native, who, as he deposed, with charming simplicity, had had the good luck to come in at the exact moment and to see the deed done! 'Why, I would not hang a *chiriya* (a bird),' remarked John Lawrence, 'on such evidence,' and he straightway quashed the whole. The same rigid sense of justice governed him throughout the Mutiny, and stood him in good stead now, when it was the fate, not of a bird, but of 120 mutineers of the 55th Regiment, whose fate was trembling in the balance. There was no doubt that every one of them had been guilty of mutiny and desertion, that they had been taken with arms in their hands, that in the eye of military law they deserved to die, and that, in the interests of mercy as well as of justice, a stern example must be made.

The authorities at Peshawur had already made up their minds.

The trial of the 55th prisoners (writes Edwardes, on June 1, to John Lawrence) will begin on Thursday; and, as they may be tried in a lump for the charge of 'Mutiny,' they will be disposed of at once; and we propose to make an awful and lasting example by blowing them away from guns before the whole garrison. Five can be placed before each gun

and two troops of artillery will throw sixty of them into the air at once. A second round will finish the matter; and, awful as such a scene will be, I must say my judgment approves it. The Native Army requires to be appalled. They have not shrunk from appalling us.

The next post took back the Chief Commissioner's reply, though his opinion had not been asked and he had no strict right to interfere.

In respect to the mutineers of the 55th, they were taken fighting us, and, so far, deserve little mercy. But, on full reflection, I would not put them all to death. I do not think that we shall be justified in the eyes of the Almighty in doing so. One hundred and twenty men are a large number to put to death. Our object is to make an example to terrify others. I think this object would be effectually gained by destroying from one-fourth to one-third of their number. I would select all those against whom anything bad could be shown—such as general bad character, turbulence, prominence in the disaffection or in the fight, disrespectful demeanour to their officers during the few days before the 26th and the like. If these would not make up the required number, I would then add to them the oldest soldiers. All these should be shot or blown away, as may be deemed expedient. The rest I would divide into batches, some to be imprisoned ten years, others seven, others five, others three. I think that a sufficient example will thus be made, and that the distinctions that will have been made will do good and not harm. The Sepoys will see that we punish to deter, and not for revenge; and public sympathy will not be on the side of the sufferers. Otherwise, men will fight desperately to the last, as certain they must die.

It is quite true that it is very inconvenient and even dangerous having so many rascals in our jail, but this we cannot help. We must suffer the inconvenience. . . . What I have written regarding the mutineers is simply my own opinion. Their fate will rest with the officers comprising the court-martial.

The next day, he recurs to the subject in still stronger terms:—

I think the arrangement to shoot every tenth man of the deserters of the 51st is good and reasonable. The example will prove efficacious, and there is nothing revengeful in the measure. But the intention o blowing away all the 55th seems to me horrible; and I entreat you to use your influence and get Cotton to modify the decision. If one-third or one-fourth were blown away, it would answer every purpose, excite equal terror; and not the same horror.

On the same day, he wrote to Cotton, direct, with equal urgency:—

I trust that you will not destroy all the men of the 55th who have been seized. . . . Such a wholesale slaughter will, I think, be cruel and have a bad effect. It will be tantamount to giving no quarter, and therefore men in similar circumstances will have no inducement to yield, but rather to fight to the last. We should also recollect that these Sepoys might have committed many atrocities, whereas they perpetrated none. They did not destroy public property, and they saved the lives of their officers when in their power. These circumstances entitle them to consideration, which I beg they will receive at your hands. I have felt vexed at seeing the way in which mutineers and murderers have escaped punishment in other places. I am a staunch advocate for punishment, but in proportion to the offence.

It is hardly necessary to add that remonstrances so vigorous, so statesmanlike, and so Christian met with the response that they deserved. Forty men only, instead of a hundred and twenty, and those the most guilty of the whole, were blown into fragments in the presence of the assembled garrison of Peshawur and of vast numbers of spectators from the surrounding country. It was a ghastly spectacle enough ; and that it was not more ghastly still, that it did not excite loathing and repulsion as well as awe, that it was looked upon as a measure of stern retribution rather than of indiscriminate revenge, was due to the man who never lost his head ; who 'never acted on mere impulse,' and, happily for the interests of mercy, as well as of justice, held the chief place in the Punjab.

The energy and promptitude which had been so abundantly displayed at Lahore and at Peshawur were brought into still stronger relief by the miserable contrast presented to them at Jullundur. At Ferozepore there had been some bungling. But at Jullundur it is not too much to say that there was a display of incapacity and neglect on the part of the chief military authorities, to which the history of the Mutiny, happily, affords few parallels. At that important cantonment there were three native regiments, two of infantry and one of cavalry, all of them well known to be tainted. On the other hand, there was the 8th Queen's Regiment, supported by an adequate artillery, and by the ever active aid of the Raja of Kupurthulla, another of those protected Sikh chieftains who seemed determined in this, the hour of our need, to pay back all that they owed us. Lake, the Commissioner of the Division, and Johnstone, who was in command of the station, had happened to be absent from Jullundur at the time of the Meerut outbreak. But their places had been ably filled by Colonel Hartley, of the 8th Queen's, and by Captain Farrington, the

Deputy Commissioner. Every precaution for the protection of the cantonments in the station had been promptly taken. A detachment had been sent off to secure the fort and arsenal of Phillour, some twenty miles distant, and the civil treasure had been transferred, by express order of Sir John Lawrence, from the care of the Sepoys to that of the European soldiers. 'Its loss,' he said, 'would strengthen the enemy, and be really discreditable to us.'

Almost the first step of Brigadier Johnstone, when he came down from Simla, was to order the treasure to be restored to the care of the Sepoys, and when peremptory orders were flashed down from Sir John Lawrence and General Reed to undo what had been done, it was already too late. For even the civilians who had been most scandalised by the fatuity of the General, feared now that to reverse the step would precipitate the outbreak. Once and again, in May, John Lawrence had advised disarmament, and, on June 5, he telegraphed to Lake to urge the Brigadier to carry it out at once. The words of the telegram I have been unable to discover, but his letter to Lake, written on the same day, will indicate its character :—

If we have any accident at Delhi, you may depend on it that we shall have an outbreak among the Sepoys in the Jullundur Doab. The question, then, is, Shall we wait for them to begin or shall we take the initiative? It is our bounden duty to take the latter course, and for you and me to urge it on Brigadier Johnstone. . . . Since I began this letter, yours of the 31st has come in and confirms all I have written. It is perfectly clear that the 36th Native Infantry are ready to break out at a moment's warning. You will receive my telegraphic message this day. I strongly urge on Brigadier Johnstone the expediency of disarming all the Poorbea Infantry, with the few exceptions of known loyalty which may exist. There can be no real difficulty in doing this. All that is required is a little management. . . . Please show this to General Johnstone. I will take the responsibility of disarming the Native Infantry.

There would have been little difficulty in carrying out the disarmament at once; for, as John Lawrence pointed out, Rothney's Sikhs happened to be passing at that very time through Jullundur on their way to Delhi, and would have been only too delighted to be employed in so congenial a task. But they were allowed to pass on. The disarmament was put off from hour to hour, on this plea or on that, till at last, on the night of the 7th, the rising which had been foreseen and might have been prevented at any moment during the last three weeks, took place. The Sepoys, with that curious

inconsistency which marked so many of their doings throughout the Mutiny, and which shows the strong conflicting currents by which they were swayed, cut down some of their officers, while they carefully sheltered others. And, by midnight, the main body of three whole regiments was in full march for Phillour, for Loodiana, and for Delhi.

But, even now, it was not too late to act. For directly in their line of march rolled the broad and rapid Sutlej, and while they were picking up another regiment of mutineers, the long-wavering 3rd at Phillour, and were afterwards endeavouring to cross the river, the pursuing force might fall upon their rear, and if they failed to cut them to pieces, might, at all events, prevent their going on to Delhi as an organised force. So, at least, it seemed to the more daring and adventurous spirits in the European force at Jullundur, and so it must seem to everybody now. But it was three whole hours before General Johnstone decided on a pursuit at all. It was four more before he was ready to start, and, when he did start, there was no real pursuit, but only a series of aimless and indeterminate forward movements and of still more aimless and indeterminate halts. In fact, while the would-be pursuers were lingering at Jullundur, the mutineers had already reached Phillour, had fraternised with the malcontent 3rd Regiment there, and were off again for the Sutlej. And while the pursuing force were making inquiries and, shameful to say, bivouacking at Phillour, the mutineers, by the help of a few crazy boats, were laboriously placing the river behind them, an operation which took not less than thirty hours to accomplish.

But they were not to pass entirely unopposed; for the qualities which were so conspicuously wanting in General Johnstone, were to be found in double measure in George Ricketts, a young civilian who was then Deputy Commissioner at Loodiana. Hearing from T. H. Thornton, another young civilian, of what was going on early in the day, Ricketts first took such precautions as he could for the safety of the station, and then carrying with him, under Lieutenant Williams, three companies of Sikhs who had just arrived, a couple of guns, and a contingent from the Raja of Nabha, he sallied forth, hoping that, if he could not prevent, he might, at least, retard the passage of the river by the Sepoys till the Jullundur force should fall upon their rear. He never doubted for a moment—nobody could have doubted—that such a force must be following close behind them. Taken between two fires, and with a broad river to cut them in halves,

the destruction of the whole would have been a certainty. The road was difficult and the sand deep, and it was not till ten at night that he reached the ghaut and found that all but four hundred of the enemy had already crossed. The horses of one of his two guns took fright, as it was being unlimbered, and galloped away with it to the enemy, and the Nabha contingent took to their heels at the first discharge. But the intrepid Ricketts worked the remaining gun himself, and with the help of the two Nabha officers, and the three companies of Sikhs, who also stood their ground, he managed, for nearly two hours, to maintain the contest against three regiments, and, at last, when his ammunition was expended, and when Williams had been shot down at his side, drew off his small remaining force in good order to the camp.

It was a fine feat of arms, and well might John Lawrence, who had sometimes been disposed to think that Ricketts was not sufficiently at home in the work of a civilian, exclaim, 'I am indeed proud of him.' 'I am highly pleased,' he wrote to Ricketts himself, shortly afterwards, 'with your energy and resolution. You did your best for the public service and maintained the honour of your cloth. . . . I do not trust myself to say what I think of the manner in which the pursuit was conducted by Johnstone.' And with good reason, too, as the details of the miserable failure of General Johnstone were revealed to him day after day, might he pour forth to all his correspondents the vials of his wrath on the incapacity of the General, whom it was still proposed to send to the Peshawur Division.

General Johnstone (he writes to Cotton) has made a nice mess at Jullundur! I entreated him, fourteen days ago, to disarm his Native regiments; then, not to allow them to have charge of his treasure; then, to be, at least, ready to crush them if they mutinied. But it was of no use. He would have his own way, and you see the result. Had he followed the mutineers sharp they would have been cut up or drowned in the Sutlej. Now they are on their way, plundering as they go, to join the mutineers at Delhi. I trust they may be too late for the fair and catch a Tartar.

To Bartle Frere he writes in much the same strain :—

We are now pretty quiet. The people are wonderfully well behaved. Peshawur, our volcano, quiescent. . . . But our great misfortune is the escape of two Native Infantry corps and half a corps of Regular Cavalry from Jullundur. They had the Sutlej in front of them and a body of

European Infantry, Irregular Cavalry, and six guns behind them The distance was twenty miles, and yet, by the anility of Brigadier Johnstone, the mutineers escaped and have gone to Delhi to add to the number of its defenders. I do assure you that some of our commanders are worse enemies than the mutineers themselves. I could sometimes almost believe that they have been given to us for our destruction.

In writing to Lord Canning, he naturally took the opportunity of clenching the question as to General Johnstone's transference to Peshawur.

General Johnstone would do nothing. He would not disarm the Sepoys, and he made no arrangements for punishing them. When they broke out, the European force was kept on the defensive; and when the mutineers bolted they were not followed for eight hours. Even then they would have been caught—for they were thirty hours getting across the Sutlej—but that the General halted half-way, at a distance of twenty-five miles! And yet this is the officer whom it is proposed to place over Brigadier S. Cotton in the Peshawur Division!

It is hardly necessary to add that it was not proposed to place him there any longer. The four mutinous regiments swept on from the Sutlej to Loodiana, raised into a short-lived disturbance its mixed and turbulent population of Cabul exiles and pensioners, of Kashmere shawl-makers and Goojur robbers, plundered or burned everything on which they could lay their hands, and then, when General Johnstone, who had been actually bivouacking within earshot of Ricketts's desperate cannonade, at length showed some signs of advancing, they passed quietly on again towards Delhi.

But there remained one city in the Punjab which, commanding, as it did, the passage of the river from Lahore and the only good road whereby his province could still hold communication with the outer world, gave Sir John Lawrence the deepest anxiety. Would the authorities at Mooltan, a city infinitely more important than Jullundur, and only less important than Lahore and Peshawur themselves, follow the example set by the almost criminal incapacity of the officer in command at the one, or would they emulate the vigour and promptitude of both the civil and military authorities at the other? This was the pressing question, and the answer to it was plain, if the Chief Commissioner could have his way. He had done everything in his power to save Jullundur. But the irresolution or obstinacy of Johnstone had been too strong for him. Would he be more successful here? Would Colonel Hicks, the chief military

authority at Mooltan, be willing to distrust, to disarm, or to crush the malcontent Sepoys, and would he have the power, even if he had the will?

Sir John Lawrence thought not. He was convinced that there was only one man in the station who would be able to carry out so difficult and dangerous an operation, when the odds were so heavy against him. General Gowan had just written to the Chief Commissioner to announce his assumption of the chief military command in the Punjab, which had been vacated by General Reed. Like his predecessor, General Gowan seems to have had no very marked ability, or force of will himself. But he had the next best thing to it, a willingness to appreciate those qualities in another, and Sir John Lawrence replied by a telegram urging, in the strongest terms, an immediate disarmament of the troops at Mooltan, and begging, as a personal favour, that Crawford Chamberlain, who was in command of the 1st Irregular Cavalry, might be selected for the duty.

Besides Chamberlain's own regiment, which consisted of Hindustanis, whom, to the best of his belief, he could trust, there were two Native Infantry regiments, one of which was certainly, the other probably, tainted. The other auxiliaries were Punjabis, but with many Hindustanis amongst them. The only Europeans were a handful of forty artillerymen. But a Bombay regiment was expected to arrive in a few days from Scinde, and their presence would make the disarmament more feasible. Most men would have been disposed to wait. But Sir John Lawrence saw that time was everything, that the news of the Jullundur mutiny which had just reached him would be at Mooltan in a couple of days at the latest, and it would then be too late. His instructions were therefore peremptory. The risk was to be run at once, and, on the morning of June 9, just before the news from Jullundur reached the station, the two Infantry regiments were disarmed, without a drop of blood being shed, by the consummate skill and courage of the man whom Sir John had selected. The well-disposed citizens of Mooltan were able, once again, to breathe freely, and the reinforcements, which Frere was already sending thither, were enabled, as they arrived, to move on, or to enable others to move on, to points where the danger was more urgent than even at Mooltan.

I have to thank you very heartily (wrote John Lawrence to Crawford Chamberlain), for the admirable manner in which you disarmed the 62nd and 69th Native Infantry. It was, I assure you, most delightful news

hearing that it had been done. It was a most ticklish thing, considering that it had to be effected entirely by native troops. I shall not fail to bring it to the special notice of Government. It would have proved a great calamity had our communications with Bombay been intercepted. I beg you will thank your own and the two Punjab corps for their good conduct.

Disarmament in fact was now, in spite of the generous scruples of some of the military authorities, to be, as far as possible, the order of the day throughout the Punjab. Sir John Lawrence placed his views on the subject before General Gowan in his first letter thus :—

If Delhi fall at once, all will go well. But should much delay occur, or, still worse, should any misfortune happen, we must be prepared for squalls. I do not myself think that a single Poorbea regiment will remain faithful, and, in that case, I consider that we should disarm every one of them, where we have the means ; that is, where European regiments are present. By doing this, we shall be in a position to maintain ourselves and hold the country. At present, with the Regular Infantry in their sullen mind, we are like a strong swimmer struggling in a troublous sea with a man clinging round his neck and trying to drag him down.

If we wait until we are attacked we shackle ourselves, and enable our enemy to watch his own opportunity for attack. Such a policy must prove fatal.

I have written this minute account of the first few weeks of the Mutiny to little purpose, if I have failed to bring out the general impression of Sir John Lawrence's policy which has forced itself upon my own mind throughout. It was a policy almost Hannibalian, almost Napoleonic in its bold and vigorous advance, in its uncompromising front, in its wide sweep of view ; almost Fabian in its prudence, in its self-restraint, in its moral courage. 'Push on,' was the policy he urged on the lingerers at Umballa, and the malingerers at Meerut. 'Disarm,' was his policy for Peshawur, for Jullundur, for Mooltan, wherever, in fact, mutinous dispositions seemed likely to pass into mutinous acts. 'Punishment prompt and vigorous,' was his policy wherever it seemed necessary as an example. But he never ceased to urge on all within the sphere of his influence that discrimination, and precaution, and prevention could do more than any amount of vindictive measures.

When the news of the massacre perpetrated by the insurgents from Delhi at Sirsa and Hissar reached him, what was the moral he drew from it ? 'These sad events,' he says, 'might, in my opinion,

have been prevented by a small party moving from Meerut towards Delhi, which would have confined the mutineers to that place. The inactivity of the Meerut force for so long a period is as unaccountable as it is lamentable.' When, at last, an advance from Meerut did take place, and he heard of General Wilson's victory on the Hindun, what was the moral he drew again? 'This success,' he writes, 'of a small party of Europeans proves what might have been done had more energetic measures been adopted at the outset. I am hopeful that his success may induce a more rapid advance.'[1] 'Push on, push on!' was still his cry.

How complete was the success of his disarmament policy at Peshawur and Mooltan, where he was warmly supported by the military authorities, General Cotton and General Gowan, I have already shown. That it would have been equally complete at Jullundur is clear had he been able to command as well as to advise; had Government, that is to say, given him the 'full powers' for which he asked, and so enabled him to get rid of the incompetent, and bring ability and vigour, at all hazards, to the front.

Nor was he less anxious to save the innocent, to put the well-disposed beyond the reach of temptation, to ease the position of those who, trustworthy themselves, were nevertheless obliged, for the time, to suffer with the guilty. In this spirit, he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief at Umballa advising him to summon all the men of the Irregular Cavalry who were on furlough at the time of the outbreak, and would therefore be liable to be carried away by it, to Meerut and enrol them there under competent officers. It was a step which if it had been taken at once, would, peradventure, have saved many well-meaning men from their own weakness, and have prevented one of Hodson's darkest deeds.

It was in the same spirit that he wrote to Lord Canning, as I have already shown, suggesting what might well have proved a masterstroke of policy, that any Sepoys who desired it should be allowed to take their discharge. The evil-disposed, he thought, would avail

[1] I owe these and some other extracts from the *official* despatches of Sir John Lawrence to the kindness of Sir Robert Egerton, the late Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, and to Mr. Arthur Brandreth, who will be frequently mentioned hereafter in this biography, and has taken the trouble, in the midst of his other work in India, of copying them out for me. The demi-official letters on which my narrative is mainly founded, and which are much more valuable for the purpose I have in view, as having been written on the spur of the moment, and showing the inner character of the man, are all in my possession.

themselves of the permission and become powerless thereby, while the good would remain and become doubly serviceable. It was in the same spirit, once more, that he advised General Corbett at Lahore, and General Cotton at Peshawur, to give back their arms to such Sikh, or Punjabi Mohammedans, or Hill-men, as had behaved well, to separate them from their Hindustani comrades and allow them, once again, to do duty. 'I suggest this,' he says, 'first, because I understand that they have no sympathy with their Poorbea comrades and have already expressed their willingness to do their duty. I know also from the testimony of the officers of the 55th Native Infantry that the men of these races in that regiment, to the number of one hundred, offered to stand by their officers and fight the rest of the regiment.' This important measure was carried out throughout his province, and the nucleus of new and valuable Sikh corps was thus obtained. One hundred Sikhs who had thus been separated from their companions, by Sir John's order, the day before the disarmament at Jhelum, did stand by their officers on the day of trial and fought splendidly. It would be difficult to say how many innocent men were saved by this stroke of policy, which was all his own, from mutiny and massacre.

Finally, finding that the Commander-in-Chief neglected to issue any general proclamation which was calculated to recall the wavering to their allegiance and to remind them of our real power, he himself drew up a well-timed manifesto on June 1, which was posted and circulated at all the stations of his province.

Sepoys,—You will have heard that many Sepoys and Sowars of the Bengal army have proved faithless to their salt at Meerut, at Delhi, and Ferozepore. Many at the latter place have been already punished. An army is assembled and is now close to Delhi, prepared to punish the mutineers and insurgents who have collected there.

Sepoys,—I warn and advise you to prove faithful to your salt; faithful to the Government who have given your forefathers and you service for the last hundred years; faithful to that Government who, both in cantonments and in the field, have been careful of your welfare and interests, and who, in your old age, have given you the means of living comfortably in your homes. Those who have studied history know well that no army has ever been more kindly treated than that of India.

Those regiments which now remain faithful will receive the rewards due to their constancy; those soldiers who fall away now will lose their service for ever! It will be too late to lament hereafter when the time has passed by. Now is the opportunity of proving your loyalty and good

faith. The British Government will never want for native soldiers. In a month, it might raise 50,000 in the Punjab alone. If the 'Poorbea' Sepoy neglects the present day, it will never return. There is ample force in the Punjab to crush all mutineers.

The chiefs and people are loyal and obedient, and the latter only long to take your place in the army. All will unite to crush you. Moreover, the Sepoy can have no conception of the power of England. Already, from every quarter, English soldiers are pouring into India.

You know well enough that the British Government have never interfered with your religion. Those who tell you the contrary say it for their own base purposes. The Hindu temple and the Mohammedan mosque have both been respected by the English Government. It was but the other day that the Jumma mosque at Lahore, which had cost lacs of rupees, and which the Sikhs had converted into a magazine, was restored to the Mohammedans.

Sepoys,—My advice is that you obey your officers. Seize all those who among yourselves endeavour to mislead you. Let not a few bad men be the cause of your disgrace. If you have the will, you can easily do this, and Government will consider it a test of your fidelity. Prove by your conduct that the loyalty of the Sepoy of Hindustan has not degenerated from that of his ancestors.

JOHN LAWRENCE,
Chief Commissioner.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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